



NEWS RELEASE

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Attorney General Jackley Warns of Pirated Websites

PIERRE, S.D. – Attorney General Marty Jackley warns that hackers are now using so-called pirate websites to infect computers. These websites, which online users visit to watch illegally distributed movies, music, books, and other copyrighted content, have become a major source for infecting computers with dangerous malware that can lead to identity theft and other serious financial and privacy harms.

“To protect your privacy, avoid pirated websites. Pirated websites are both wrong and dangerously risk identity theft and financial loss. This includes ‘ransomware’ a malicious software that threatens to publish its victim’s data or block access unless a ransom is paid,” said Jackley.

Link to PSA addressing pirated websites <https://app.frame.io/f/OgNfm6NN>.

Malware, such as the types caused by infections from pirate websites, can lead to:

- Financial loss, including breaches to bank accounts.
- Identity theft and loss of privacy that are not easily cleared up.
- So-called ransomware, where access to a computer is frozen until the user pays the ransom using multiple methods i.e. MoneyGram, Western Union, pre-loaded cards, etc.
- Spyware downloads that grants hacker’s access to the computer’s camera without the user’s knowledge.

TIPS that can help avoid your computer being compromised:

- Avoid pirate websites and only visit legal, legitimate websites.
- Install anti-virus programs and keep them updated.
- If you think your computer has been compromised, alert a computer specialist to have your computer analyzed.
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A recent study found that 1 in 3 of these pirate websites exposed users to malware exploitable by criminals, and that almost half of the malware was “drive-by”: delivered without a user even having to click on the link.

If you have been targeted by criminals, alert your local law enforcement. For more information and tips to avoid scams and other consumer related issues, contact the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division at 800- 300-1986 or email consumerhelp@state.sd.us or visit <http://atg.sd.gov/>.

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