



State of Iowa Intelligence Fusion Center

215 E 7th Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

June 20, 2010

Intelligence Assessment

Reference: 20100188

HANDLING NOTICE: Iowa Intelligence Fusion Center Assessments are provided to law enforcement and non-law enforcement partners in Iowa in order to anticipate, detect, prevent, and disrupt criminal activity. Receipt and dissemination of this document is restricted by Iowa law (Chapter 692). Release of the information to the media, public, or transmission of this product over non-secure Internet servers is strictly prohibited.

“Health Inspector Scam” Hits Iowa

Two convenience stores in western Iowa were reportedly the target of a ‘health inspector scam’, in which individuals seek to bypass on-line auction or selling site regulations and establish fraudulent accounts.

- Scammers are seeking to use the targeted entity’s landline phone number to acquire an automated PIN, generated by the on-line sites, to establish a fraudulent account.
- The scammers can then use this account to sell fraudulent goods or services with the phone number on the account coming back to the initial targeted business.
- Scammers may also seek personal identifying information, bank account information, cell phone numbers, or other business information.

The Scam

A fake health inspector contacts the target to set up an inspection, threatening to fine the establishment if it doesn't cooperate. The owner is advised that a subsequent automated call will provide them with a numeric code that they should write down. After the automated call, another person calls saying they are from the health department, asks for the numeric code, and arranges to set up the appointment. The fake health inspector never shows and the scam may not be readily apparent to the business owner.

-Connecticut Intelligence Center

The Food & Consumer Safety Bureau of the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals has identified factors that would indicate an entity is the target of a possible scam:

- Inspections are generally not pre-scheduled
- The DIA and contracted inspection agencies do not use voice automated systems nor do they issue PINs.
- Inspectors will not threaten to issue fines for non-compliance

The Food & Consumer Safety Bureau also indicated that most establishments will know the food inspector or the food inspection agency.

RESPONSE:

Businesses can run a simple search engine inquiry to determine if their phone number appears on any online auctions or other websites where goods or services are sold. Businesses should contact local law enforcement if they believe they are the subject of this or any scam.

*****This product was written so it could be released to local businesses that are subject to health inspections.*****

Toll Free: (800) 308-5983

Fax: (515) 725-6320

Email: ialein@mocic.riss.net

This information is managed by: STATE OF IOWA INTELLIGENCE FUSION CENTER

FOR
LAW
ENFORCEMENT
-
FOOD
ESTABLISHMENTS