

## New Debt Collection SPAM Scam Could Include Identity Theft

August 16, 2016 - There is a new debt collection scam making the rounds. It really isn't that different from other debt collection scams using email to contact victims. The scammers send out batches of email SPAM that accuse the recipients of having unpaid debts. The email messages name an amount owed and offer to settle the debt at percentage of the amount owed. And of course, they tell the recipient to pay for the debt using a purchased cash card so that the money can't be traced. But here is where the scam gets a little frightening. Some of the email messages that victims receive include their social security number and driver's license number.

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```
(function() {  
var s = document.createElement('SCRIPT'), s1 = document.getElementsByTagName('SCRIPT')[0];  
s.type = 'text/javascript';  
s.src = 'http://widgets.digg.com/buttons.js';  
s1.parentNode.insertBefore(s, s1);  
})();
```

```
(function() {  
var po = document.createElement('script'); po.type = 'text/javascript'; po.async = true;  
po.src = 'https://apis.google.com/js/plusone.js';  
var s = document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0]; s.parentNode.insertBefore(po, s);  
})();
```

This particular scam started in central Florida but there are no geographical barriers to it spreading. While it is impossible to know where victims' money is being sent, there are several clues that will tell observant recipients that the message isn't legitimate. These include the use of bad grammar, misspelled words and a request to make payment through a purchased cash card.

Just as important, anyone receiving a message similar to the one described here should check the licensing of the debt collection agency with the state in which they reside. Most states require debt collectors to register with them and it is illegal for them to operate if they don't.

Not all of the letters sent to consumers contain additional personal information such as SSNs but anyone receiving a letter that does needs to be particularly careful. Inclusion of that information means that the person sending the letter may also have enough information on you to commit identity theft in your name.

by Jim Malmberg

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