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MEDIA RELEASE

Uptick in Fraud Cases and Fraud Prevention Tips

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The Rock County Sheriff's Office and surrounding agencies have recently seen a large uptick in fraud cases, especially victimizing older people. Unfortunately, in most cases the money that is lost cannot be recovered because of the avenues the monies are transferred. The Rock County Sheriff's Office reminds the public to be vigilant on who you give personal information and send money to. Please watch out for each other and the older population. If you see someone in front of you at the store with a large amount of gift cards, they could potentially be a victim of a scam.

Fraud Prevention Tips:

1. The IRS will contact you through U.S. Mail. There are times when the IRS will contact a person by phone or in person, but this contact is preceded by a letter sent through U.S. Mail.
2. If someone is asking you to pay for a fine or other services by gift cards, this should set off red flags. Scammers use this tactic to easily access money by the least restrictive measures.
3. The Rock County Sheriff's Office will not contact you by phone to pay for an outstanding warrant or fine. This is the same for most agencies. If a person claiming to be a law enforcement officer calls and states you have a warrant for your arrest and you need to pay it, please hang up and contact the agency that the person says that they are calling from to verify.
4. "Grandkid is in Jail" Scam: Often, older adults will be contacted by a person claiming to be their grandchild and advised that they are currently in jail and need bond money. Most of the time, they will not know your grandchild's name until you give it to them. Do not act on these phone calls. Call relatives to check the status of your loved one.
5. Do not give any personal identifying information over the phone unless it is from a trusted source, and YOU initiate the contact.
6. Email Scams: Scammers will email you telling you your Amazon or bank account has been locked, and you need to change your password. This is used to gain access to your account and purchase items once your account is hacked. If you receive an email like this, do NOT click the link. Go to the trusted website that you normally go to through your search browser, login, and check for yourself.
7. IF IT SEEMS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE, IT PROBABLY IS!
8. If something doesn't seem right, ask someone. Ask a trusted friend, a family member, or call the Rock County Sheriff's Office non-emergency at 608-757-2244.

CURTIS N. FELL
 SHERIFF

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