

Internet Safety

NEW! [Identity Theft Victim's Packet](#).

This information is for you if you believe or know that you have been a victims of Identity Theft. This crime may or may not be computer/Internet based.

Basic Tips for Safe Computer & Internet Use:

Do business with companies you know and trust. You may be doing business with a company located in another country. Investigate the company's track record. Resolving disputes or criminal prosecution is very difficult when crossing state or country borders.

Know the terms and conditions of any services or product offer. The Federal Telephone and Mail Order Rule requires delivery of promised goods within 30 days. provide credit card numbers, bank accounts numbers, or your social security number unless your are certain that you trust the company. Even partial information will allow a con-artist to steal your identity and put you into serious financial trouble.

Whenever possible, you should use a credit card to protect yourself from fraud. It will be easier to dispute a charge when paid by a credit card than if you pay by check or money order. Legitimate companies will most likely accept credit cards.

- Secure Encryption Technology will provide a safer means of paying online. Look for an "s" at the end of "http://", such as "https://....".
- Email, chat room & newsgroup users may not always be who they seem to be! When you receive an email containing an attachment, image or .wav file from an address you are not familiar with, it is best to NOT open the file. Viruses can be forwarded to you even by your best friends! Report unsolicited email (also called "spamming") to your Internet Service Provider (ISP).

In the event you are a victim of Internet crime:

We at the Holland Police Department hope that you understand the great complexity of investigating these types of crimes. We realize what it is to be a victim of these "invisible" criminals and will do all we can to bring about a criminal prosecution on your behalf.

Please study the contents of this page with care!

Your understanding of what to do in the event you are a victim of computer or Internet fraud /crime is very important.

- If you are a victim, AND ARE A RESIDENT of the City of Holland, MI, you may call 9-1-1 to file a complaint with a police officer. The Officer who initially takes your complaint will most likely have to forward to the matter to the Department's Detective Bureau and possibly to the State or Federal level. You may also be asked to file your complaint online with both the F.B.I. and the National White Collar Crime Center's Internet Fraud Complaint Center (IFCC) and the Michigan Department of Attorney General's High Tech Crime Unit (HTCU).
- If you are a victim, BUT ARE NOT A RESIDENT, and believe the suspect to live in the Holland area, you may send an informative email to our department AND you should also file with the IFCC and Michigan's HTCU.
- Be sure that you have available the Incident/Complaint Number of the report initially taken by the Holland PD Officer.

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Published on City of Holland Michigan Official Website (<http://www.cityofholland.com>)

If you are a victim of internet crime, email fraud or email stalking, we encourage you to file a formal complaint. Simply phone "911" to have an officer come see you. The Officer who initially takes your complaint will gather as much information as possible and will most likely have to forward the matter to the Department's Detective Bureau or possibly to the State or Federal level.

You have most likely been requested by the investigating Officer to file your complaint online with two agencies. It is very important that you do this. These two agencies compile reports like yours from all over the world and can determine the "bigger picture" of schemes and suspect activity.

Source URL (retrieved on 2015-01-30 20:01): <http://www.cityofholland.com/police/internet-safety>