



City of Monroe Police Department
100 East Second St. Monroe MI 48161 734-243-7500
Chief of Police Charles F. McCormick IV



PRESS RELEASE

Date: 11-26-2018

Incident: **Identity Theft and Financial Scams**

The Monroe Police Department would like to remind everyone to be extra vigilant during the Holiday Season. There is always a significant increase in on-line shopping this time of year and a corresponding increase in Financial Scams and mail / package delivery thefts.

It is strongly recommended that you only use known, secure websites for shopping. There are many fake shopping sites. These sites appear to be legitimate, but are designed specifically to obtain your credit card information. They are very realistic in their appearance and their formats that directly mimic legitimate sites. However, after entering your payment information, the merchandise is never sent and your credit card information is then used by the perpetrator or sold to someone else.

It is also recommended that you utilize the package tracking options for delivery when available and try not to leave delivered packages on your porch for an extended length of time (ask a friend or family member to pick them up if needed).

Another common scam seen during this season is the Mystery or Secret Shopper Scam. This is where the victim is sent a check, which includes both their payment and the funds to use as the "Secret Shopper". The victim is instructed to deposit the check into their account and to go to legitimate stores to "test" the in-store money transfer service such as Western Union or MoneyGram, by wiring some of the deposited funds back to them. The victim may also be instructed to "test" reloadable Gift Card's by purchasing them and sending back the numbers. Unfortunately, the check that is deposited is always fake, leaving the victim out thousands of dollars.

A good rule of thumb to follow is that a legitimate company will not ask you to pay a fee to receive a prize. Nor will a legitimate company ask to be paid with gift cards or wire transfers. Sometimes a simple internet search on a company will answer any questions you have about their legitimacy. There are also several websites dedicated to identifying Financial Scams and Fraud:

<https://www.usa.gov/stop-scams-frauds>

<https://www.fbi.gov/scams-and-safety/common-fraud-schemes/internet-fraud>

"The mission of the Monroe Police Department is to protect the freedom and safety of the citizens of Monroe and its visitors by preventing crime and disorder and ensuring the safe efficient flow of traffic."

For More Information Contact:

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