

Phishing Scams



What is Phishing?

- It is a form of identity theft.
- It involves obtaining someone's financial information for illegal purpose by sending a fraudulent email.
- It can appear to be a legitimate email with a reasonable request—usually to verify your personal information or account details.

How does Phishing work?

- Scam artists send legitimate-looking requests posing as representatives of a trusted financial institution or business
- The email asks for verification of an account number or password via email or directs you to a website where you are asked to update or confirm your personal information
- Scam artists create fake websites that may look like those of the company they are impersonating and use “masks” to hide the real URL
- Scam artists also use pop-up windows that contain false or misleading messages

How can I spot a Phishing Scam?

- The email may contain logos or images taken from the website of the company the scam artist is impersonating
- The “form” field appears to be from the legitimate company
- The email will contain a clickable link with text suggesting you use it to validate your information
- Look for misspelled domain names like www.yohoo.com or www.paypol.com
- Never trust emails that direct you to a website whose URL is only an IP address like 102.199.60.250

How can I protect myself?

- Do not reply to emails or pop-ups requesting personal or financial information
- Use anti-virus and anti-spyware software and update them regularly
- Use a firewall
- Do not share personal or financial information by email
- Review all credit card and bank statements as soon as you receive them
- Be cautious about opening attachments or downloading any files from emails
- If you believe you have been a victim of phishing, file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission by visiting www.ftc.gov or calling 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357).

Who to Call for Help

Vernon College (940) 552-6291

VC Dean of Student Services

Vernon ext. 2250 / WF ext. 3333

VC Student Services

Vernon ext. 2278 / WF ext. 3206

VC Police Dept.

Vernon ext. 2272 / WF ext. 3207

Vernon Police Dept.

(940) 553-3311

Wichita Falls Police Dept.

(940) 720-5000

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