



Greeting Card Industry and the FBI Warn Consumers of an E-Card Scam

WASHINGTON, July 25 *PRNewswire* — The greeting card industry and the FBI are warning consumers of fraudulent e-mails claiming to contain an electronic greeting card from an unnamed individual, such as a "friend" or "classmate."

These "phishing" e-mails, which falsely claim to be from legitimate greeting card companies, instruct consumers to click on a link in the e-mail message to view their e-card. Clicking on the link can potentially introduce a virus into the consumer's computer.

"If you get an e-mail claiming you've received an e-card from a generic 'friend' or 'family member' rather than from someone whose name or personal e-mail address you recognize, the e-mail is fraudulent and should be immediately deleted," says John Hambrick, Unit Chief of the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center. "Do not follow any of the instructions in the e-mail or click on any link."

For consumers who are unsure if an e-card notice is legitimate, the Greeting Card Association recommends that they go directly to the publisher's website to retrieve an e-card, rather than clicking on a link within the e-mail.

— Manually type the name of the card publisher's website URL into your browser window.
— Locate the "e-card pick up" area on the publisher's website. — Take the card number or retrieval code information contained in the e-mail and enter it into the appropriate box or boxes on the publisher's e-card pick-up area. — If you are unable to retrieve the e-card, you will know the notification was a scam, and that it should be deleted.

Consumers who receive these fraudulent e-mails are encouraged to file a complaint with the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center at www.ic3.gov. The Federal Trade Commission has also been notified of the scam.

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