

Welcome to the SeaComm Federal Credit Union podcast. Your guide to financial information and what's going on at your credit union!

May is Older Americans Month and National Senior Fraud Awareness Day is observed May 15th. Though older adults on average lose more money to fraud than other age groups, they are still the least likely age group to report that loss.

So, how do the crooks contact their victims? Well, scammers may try to get in touch by phone.

Robocalls offering everything from auto warranties to vacations, they may also issue a threat to try and get your attention. You may receive a text message from an unknown number or email address. This is called smishing and can include a link to a scammer's website or app. Don't click on links in texts.

Scammers impersonate IRS personnel, police, survey takers, relatives, delivery people and well-known companies to threaten you or to gain your trust. They use scare tactics related to your social security number, criminal record or account before asking for your personal, account or credit card information. Don't be taken in and don't give out any information.

Crooks scrape social media sites looking for personal information. And because so many of us provide a lot of this — often posting birthdates, names, marital status, headshots and location — online, these fraudsters can nab plenty of personal information. They can then either use this to access online financial accounts or take out loans or credit cards in your name. Post as little personal information on social media sites as possible. And never post photos that give away your address or personal information.

Email phishing spelled with a "ph" is a well know but still successful technique for scammers, rule of thumb... don't click on links in emails and always check through other measures such as a phone call to make sure any email requests are legitimate.

Nothing you can do can protect you 100% but you can make it much harder for the crooks to victimize you...

Protect your personal information and never share it. Never. Never send money unless you are 100% sure who you are sending it to and if they ask you to send it in gift cards... don't!

If you are ever asked to refund money to someone, be extremely vigilant. It is likely a scam. Never agree to deposit a check and wire transfer money back to anyone or forward funds to a third-party.

Be cautious when dealing with people you have only met online. If you do want to send them money, only use secure traceable transactions.

If you believe you may have been taken advantage of by sending money or sharing financial information, you should take action. Scamming is a crime. If you feel you may be a victim, don't

feel embarrassed. If you aren't sure, talk to someone you trust but be sure to stop sending money immediately.

Report the details to all your financial institutions including credit card companies and be sure to notify the police. A police report will give you a record of the crime and give them the information they need to alert the public.

Always be sure to keep in touch with the senior members of your family, ask questions and make sure they are not being taken advantage of.

That's it for this edition of the SeaComm Federal Credit Union podcast. Thanks for joining us!