

# Lake County Sheriff's Office



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Date: August 7, 2019

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**John D. Idleburg**  
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## MEDIA RELEASE

### Increase in Scammers Targeting Lake County Residents

In an effort to keep the public aware of recent crime trends, the Lake County Sheriff's Office would like to inform the public on an emerging financial scam. The Lake County Sheriff's Office has seen an increase in reports of people becoming victims of computer-based scams. There are several types of scams which are committed over electronic devices including cellular phones and computers. Scammers are calling citizens and claiming they are employed by computer repair companies and they "accidentally" deposited money into the citizen's bank account. In some cases, the scammers will direct the citizen that the only way they can repay the falsely deposited money is to purchase gift cards and give them the gift card numbers over the phone.

In other cases, the scammer will persuade the citizen to download a computer program onto their computer which gives the scammer access to the citizen's computer data. The scammer then tells the citizen to log into their online bank account and the scammer will then transfer funds from a savings account to a checking account, often labeling the transfer as the name of the fake computer repair company in order to trick the citizen. The scammer then tells the citizen the transfer of money was "accidentally" deposited into their account. The scammer then says the only way they can get repaid is through business gift cards. The scammer then instructs the citizen to go to a local store, often Walmart or Target, and purchase a large sum of gift cards and give them the gift card numbers over the phone. The scammer will often stay on the phone with the citizen during this entire process.

Beware that companies and government entities are NOT paid with gift cards. Do NOT allow anyone you do not personally know persuade you to download an unknown computer program to your computer.

The Lake County Sheriff's Office would like to remind the public to be suspicious of people calling them to obtain money or gift cards.

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