

NEWS RELEASE

EUREKA POLICE DEPARTMENT

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Date: 3/20/13

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Subject: EPD Issues Public Service Advisory Concerning Ransomware Computer Virus Scam

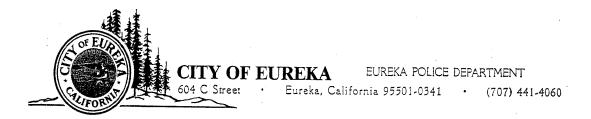
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On 3/20/13, the Eureka Police Department received a report of a computer-related scam now affecting some local residents. Victims report a pop-up message will appear on their personal computer. The message is purportedly from the "**Department of Homeland Security National Cyber Security Division**." The message, which appears to be a form of malware/virus known as "ransomware," states: "*The work of your computer has been suspended on the grounds of the violation of the law of the United States of America*." It further declares, "*This computer has been blocked*."

The message remains locked in the front of one's screen and the user is unable to close it or access other programs. It essentially freezes the computer. The message instructs the user that to "unlock" the computer they are "*obliged to pay a fine of \$300.00*." It further states they must pay this fine through "MoneyPak" within 48 hours (Green Dot MoneyPak is available through Walmart, Kmart, Rite Aid and other major retailers). If the fine has not been paid, it threatens the user will become the subject of criminal prosecution without the right to pay the fine. The warning asserts once you pay the "fine" your computer will be unblocked. The "fine" is paid by entering your \$300.00 MoneyPak code into a box on the pop-up warning screen and clicking ok.



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The warning screen is very convincing with logos from Homeland Security as well as major retailers such as Walmart. Walmart and the other retailers are <u>not</u> associated with this scam. Alternate versions of this same scam may use the FBI's logo

Anyone receiving this message should not enter a MoneyPak code or any other payment method into the screen. Users should file a complaint with the Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) at http://www.ic3.gov/default.aspx. The IC3 is a partnership between the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the National White Collar Crime Center (NW3C).

Additional information concerning this scam may be found at the following internet links.

http://corporate.walmart.com/privacy-security/fraud-alerts/green-dot-moneypak-scam

http://www.ic3.gov/media/2012/121130.aspx

See Screen Shot Below



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