



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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District Attorney Nola Foulston reminds everyone to be wary of any solicitation, by e-mail or other means, requesting consumers provide bank account or other financial information.

The District Attorney has learned of e-mail solicitations sent to consumers in the Wichita area from "SouthTrust" requesting consumers to type in their username and password and then to log in on their accounts. The Consumer Fraud division has contacted SouthTrust and verified that this e-mail is a scam. It is not a legitimate communication from SouthTrust.

This e-mail differs from that which one would use if you were accessing your own account. In this scam using the SouthTrust name, the communication **is sent to you**. When you access your own banking information on-line, **you are the one sending the e-mail and accessing a secure site**. In other words, you are not solicited by your own bank using an e-mail.

This is a tactic used by criminals called "Phishing", because the tactic is similar to a fisherman casting bait into a pond hoping to deceive and catch a fish. Criminals are hoping local consumers will "take the bait" and provide the information so the criminals can access the bank account or fraudulently use the credit card of the unsuspecting consumer. **Legitimate financial institutions do not solicit customer account information from their customers.**

In the event you receive such a solicitation, **do not provide the information**. If you receive a request for information you believe may be legitimate, contact your financial institution before filling out forms or providing information. Often the financial institutions that are the subject of such attacks have warnings posted on their websites outlining the known scams and providing details about the various techniques.

If any consumers have been the victims of such a scheme, please report the event to the Internet Fraud Complaint Center at **<http://www.ifccfbi.gov/cf1.asp>**

For more information, contact Sharon Werner, Chief Attorney, Consumer Fraud and Economic Crime Division, at 383-7921.

*Nola Tedesco Foulston
District Attorney*