

**November 6, 2017**

## **Beware of High-Dollar Email Fraud**

### ***Online thieves attempt to steal home buyer's earnest money payment***

Fortunately, after several unsuccessful attempts, the buyer finally got in touch with his realtor just before sending the funds and he did not send the money. The email was a fraud; someone had hacked the realtor's email account. If the buyer would have sent the funds, they would have been gone and unrecoverable.

The Village Police Department alerted Bank of America's security department to make them aware of the account that was involved in this attempted theft. The Village PD also contacted the Financial Crimes Section of the Montgomery County Police Department, and they believe that these criminals target real estate agents' email addresses because transaction amounts are large making their crimes potentially very lucrative. Detective Kimberly Pratt from the County's Financial Crimes Section forwarded a message (see the link at the bottom of this alert) from the National Association of Realtors which contains some excellent prevention measures including:

- Do not send sensitive information via email. If you must use email to send sensitive information, use encrypted email.
- Immediately prior to wiring any money, the person sending the money must call the intended recipient to verify the wiring instructions. Only use a verified telephone number to make this call.
- Do not trust contact information in unverified emails. The hackers will recreate legitimate-looking signature blocks with their own telephone number. In addition, fraudsters will include links to fake websites to further convince victims of their legitimacy.
- Never click on any links in an unverified email. In addition to leading you to fake websites, these links can contain viruses and other malicious spyware that can make your computer – and your transactions – vulnerable to attack.
- Never conduct business over unsecured wifi.
- Trust your instincts. Tell clients that if an e-mail or a telephone call ever seems suspicious or "off," that they should refrain from taking any action until the communication has been independently verified as legitimate.

By the way, the buyer's offer was not the winning bid, and he didn't get the home after all. At least he didn't lose \$100,000 in the process.

Link to NAR message:

<https://www.nar.realtor/real-estate-services-update/urgent-alert-sophisticated-email-scams-targeting-the-real-estate-industry>

**October 16, 2017**

## **One Home Break-in and Two Attempted Break-ins within an 8-day Period**

***Two on the west side of the Village; one on the east side***

***Residents should lock up, set alarms, and call the police when they see anyone or anything that arouses their suspicion***

## The three events are summarized below:

1. 5800 block of Connecticut Avenue; Sunday, October 8 between 3:00 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.

- Resident was at home and did not see or hear anything unusual
- Resident discovered a window screen had been torn and a planter under the window was on the ground below
- 2 laptop computers and costume jewelry taken

2. Unit block of Newlands Street; Sunday, October 15 between 11:40 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.

- Resident was not at home when it occurred
- Resident returned home to find fresh pry marks near the lock on the front door
- This was an attempt; the suspect did not make entry

3. 5400 block of Center Street; Monday, October 16 between 8:00 a.m. and 2:45 p.m.

- Resident was not at home when it occurred
- Resident returned to find a basement door window pane broken out; the burglar apparently reached through the broken pane to unlock the door
- Several drawers and cabinets opened and items disturbed, but nothing taken

Village officers canvassed the neighborhoods after each event, and no one reported seeing anyone suspicious or hearing any unusual noises.

Village officers will be patrolling and looking to speak with anyone who:

- appears to be walking aimlessly; or
- is going door to door; or
- is sitting in a parked vehicle; or
- is not dressed for the weather; or
- otherwise arouses their suspicion.

***Please call the Village Police Department (301-654-7300) if you see anyone who appears suspicious or out of place. Lock your doors and windows, set an alarm if you have one, and consider installing a web-based video doorbell (search the web for 'video doorbell'; they're great for security).***

## March 13, 2017

### Resident Spots Suspect Entering Cars on Primrose at 5:25 a.m.

*Alert resident calls police*

At 5:25 this morning, a Village resident in the 100 block of Primrose looked outside and saw a slender male

opening the doors of a two cars which were parked in a neighbor's driveway. The resident noticed that the man was being shadowed by a slow-moving silver or grey Honda CRV—apparently driven by the suspect's co-conspirator.

The resident saw the young man suddenly break into a run toward Brookville Road and the Honda followed along behind him. The resident called the police and Village and Montgomery County officers responded. Officer Hearn of the Village arrived right away, but the suspects had already left the scene; police did not locate the Honda CRV or the man who was afoot.

Investigation revealed that a total of 4 cars had been entered—2 in the 100 block of Primrose and 2 in the unit block. Taken were \$1.50 in coins and a Swiss Army knife. During the neighborhood canvass, officers found a number of unlocked cars.

The alert resident undoubtedly stopped the thieves from entering additional cars.

**Please make it your habit to lock your car every time you park!**

**February 23, 2017**

**The Metropolitan (DC) Police Department is investigating three robberies that occurred in upper northwest not far from American University.**

All three robberies were committed by groups of Hispanic suspects (between 2 and 5 perpetrators), and in each event, the victim was walking alone. The Village PD spoke directly to Lt. Hill and learned that the first 2 events (Idaho Avenue and Glenbrook Road) occurred in the afternoon between 4pm and 5pm; the event on Massachusetts Avenue occurred in the late evening (11pm).

The below unedited message comes from Lt. Alan Hill of the Metropolitan Police. Residents are urged to remain aware of their surroundings, keep their cell phones out of sight, and to walk in groups whenever possible.

*Good afternoon, over the past two days there have been three robberies in the Second District that are similar in nature.*

*Robbery F/V: 3225 Idaho Ave, NW. CCN: 029-960. PSA 204.*

*The Complainant 4-5 suspects approached him while he was looking at his cell phone. The suspects encircled the Complainant and grabbed his arm and took his cell phone before fleeing on foot.*

*Robbery: 4901 Glenbrook Rd, NW. CCN: 030-415. PSA 205.*

*The Complainant reports, that two Suspects (H/M) approached him and demanded money. Suspects took an Iphone from the complainant before fleeing on foot. C-1 was unharmed in the course of the offense.*

*Robbery (Gun): 4100 Massachusetts Ave, NW. CCN 030-615. PSA 205.*

*The Complainant reports, Suspects 1 thru 3 approached him in the driveway of the location and displayed a handgun before making a demand for property. The Complainant complied and turned over the property to the suspects who fled in a dark colored sedan.*

*Look out Three Hispanic males 5'11"-6'1" tall, all were wearing hoods.*