

BancorpSouth Initiates Electronic and Legal Action to Combat Fraudulent Emails

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BancorpSouth has initiated electronic and legal actions to combat fraudulent emails -- commonly called "phishing" -- being received by customers as well as non-customers. Other financial institutions and businesses also have experienced similar fraud. This is a form of identity theft, a serious crime that affects 10 million people in America each year.

"The current rash of emails seems to be directed to government and educational email addresses," says Cathy Talbot, vice president, Corporate Security Department, BancorpSouth. "These messages are urging people to 'update,' 'validate' or 'confirm' their account information. The email may even offer a gift card or other incentive to provide your personal information."

Common phishing requests ask for:

- Social Security number
- Checking account number
- Debit card or credit card number
- Personal Identification Number (PIN)
- Security number on the back of your debit card or credit card

Talbot stresses, "Financial institutions will never send an email requesting personal information or information about an account. BancorpSouth provides consumer fraud alerts and information on our website, www.bancorpsouth.com. The bank continues to be proactive, notifying our customers of suspected fraudulent schemes."

In the Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) consumer alert entitled, "How Not to Get Hooked by a 'Phishing' Scam," certain suggestions are made to help consumers:

1. Do not reply to an email or pop-up message that asks for personal or financial information. Do not click on the link within the email message.
2. Use antivirus software and a firewall, and keep them up to date.
3. Do not send personal or financial information in response to an unsolicited email.
4. Review credit card and bank account statements as soon as they are received to check for unauthorized charges.
5. Be cautious about opening any attachment or downloading any files from email messages.
6. Consumers who have been scammed can file their complaint at www.ftc.gov and should visit the FTC's identity theft Web site at www.consumer.gov/idtheft.

For free information on consumer issues, visit www.ftc.gov or call 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357).

SOURCE: BancorpSouth, Inc.

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Web site: <http://www.bancorpsouth.com/>

<http://www.ftc.gov/>

<http://www.consumer.gov/idtheft>

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