



ALERT – This Credit Card Scam is Real

This one could easily slip by most anyone - beware of people bearing gifts. The following is a recounting of the incident from the victim:

Wednesday a week ago, I had a phone call from someone saying that he was from some outfit called: "Express Couriers," (The name could have been anything) he asked if I was going to be home because there was a package delivery for me that required a signature . The caller said that the delivery would arrive at my home in roughly an hour, and sure enough, about an hour later, a uniformed delivery man turned up with a beautiful basket of flowers and wine. I was very surprised since it did not involve any special occasion or holiday, and I certainly didn't expect anything like it. Intrigued about who had sent me such a gift, I inquired as to who the sender was. The deliveryman's reply was, he was only delivering the gift package, but allegedly a card was being sent separately... (the card has never arrived!) There was also a consignment note with the gift.

He then went on to explain that because the gift contained alcohol, there was a \$3.50 "delivery/verification charge," providing proof that he had actually delivered the package to an adult of legal drinking age, and not just left it on the doorstep where it could be stolen or taken by anyone, especially a minor.

This sounded logical and I offered to pay him cash. He then said that the delivery company required payment to be by credit or debit card only, so that everything is properly accounted for, and this would keep help in keeping a legal record of the transaction. He added couriers not needing to carry a bunch of cash, would make them less likely targets for robbery.

My husband, (was he a blond?) who by this time was standing beside me, pulled his wallet out of his pocket with the credit/debit card, and 'John,' the "delivery man," asked my husband to swipe his card on a small mobile card machine. It had a small screen and keypad where Frank was also asked to enter the card's PIN and security number. A receipt was printed out and given to us as our copy of the transaction. He then said everything was in order, and wished us good day.

To our horrible surprise, between Thursday and the following Monday, \$4,000 had been charged/withdrawn from our credit/debit account at various ATM machines.

It appeared that somehow the "mobile credit card machine," which the deliveryman carried now had all the info necessary to create a "dummy" card with all our card details after my husband swiped our card and entered the requested PIN and security number.

Upon finding out about the illegal transactions on our card, we immediately notified the bank which issued us a new card, and our credit/debit account was closed.

We also personally went to the Police, where it was confirmed that it is definitely a scam because several households had been similarly hit.

WARNING: Be wary of accepting any "surprise gift or package," which you neither expected nor personally ordered, especially if it involves any kind of payment as a condition of receiving the gift or package. Also, never accept anything if you do not personally know or there is no proper identification of who the sender is.

Above all, the only time you should give out any personal credit/debit card information is when you yourself initiated the purchase or transaction!

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