



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**UNAUTHORIZED CHARGES SHOWING UP ON BANK STATEMENTS ACROSS
THE COUNTRY**

RICHMOND, VA Scores of consumers are opening their monthly checking account statements to find that their accounts have been debited electronically without their consent. These charges come in the form of electronic checks and range from \$10.00 to \$40.00. So far, the Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) has received more than 400 complaints from unsuspecting consumers nationwide. But, the number could go much, much higher.

On the electronic check is the name of a business, an 800 number to call and a reference number. When the victim calls the number, an operator claiming to be based in Nicosia, Cyprus informs him or her that the charge was levied by an adult Web site. Fortunately, most victims who call to refute the charges are usually refunded their money. Many victims, however, fail to even notice the bogus transactions, let alone call to contest them.

The victims' computers may have been compromised by some form of malware (i.e., hijacker, keylogger, etc.) which allowed unauthorized users to gain access to private bank account or other information. To help eliminate the threat, the National White Collar Crime Center (NW3C) urges consumers to avoid clicking on any email attachments delivered to either work or at home addresses from unknown sources. They should also closely monitor their monthly bank statements for any irregularities.

If you have been victimized by this scam, NW3C recommends that you contact your local police department and then file a complaint with IC3 at www.ic3.gov. IC3 works with federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to follow-up on such complaints.

About NW3C

NW3C is a leader in helping law enforcement combat economic and cybercrime. Visit the NW3C Web site at www.nw3c.org