



SHERIFF

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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San Mateo County Sheriff's Office alerts residents following recent online scams

SAN MATEO COUNTY, Calif. – The San Mateo County Sheriff's Office is encouraging residents to be on high alert after receiving multiple reports of online scams this week. The recent scams appear to target elderly residents, and one scam resulted in thousands of dollars of losses to the victim.

On August 15, 2024, Sheriff's deputies were dispatched to the 100 block of Balboa Ave. in El Granada in response to an elderly resident who had fallen victim to an online scam. The victim replied to a computer notification indicating that his computer had been hacked. The victim was then instructed to call a phone number, at which point the suspect directed the victim to remove cash from his bank account and purchase gift cards. Following the purchase of the gift cards, the victim was instructed to meet with the scammers in-person at the victim's residence. The scammers, who identified themselves as couriers, responded to the residence separately and at different times. The most recent courier was described as an Asian man in his early 20's, with blonde or pink hair. The suspects each walked away from the residence, completing this complex theft.

Earlier this week, the Sheriff's Office took a separate, but similar report in El Granada. Similar to Thursday's theft, the victim received a message on his computer stating that the device had been compromised. The scammer then called the victim and instructed him to withdraw a significant amount of money from his bank account. The victim recognized this was a scam and did not follow through with the request. The scammers were unsuccessful, and the victim reported the attempted fraud to the Sheriff's Office.

The Sheriff's Office is utilizing all available resources to investigate these crimes. Residents can assist law enforcement by keeping the following safety tips in mind.

- Never allow a stranger remote access to your computer
- If someone directs you to withdraw money from your account or purchase gift cards, stop immediately and call law enforcement

Anyone with information about these recent crimes is asked to contact the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office at 650-363-4911. Additionally, anonymous tips can be provided via the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office Anonymous Tip Line at 1-800-547-2700.