CCER Committee - November 2026
Community Safety Message



Green Valley Sheriff's Auxiliary Volunteers (GVSAV)

HOLIDAY SHOPPING SCAMS

As the holiday season begins, millions of Americans will head online to shop for gifts. Unfortunately, thousands fall prey to holiday shopping scams each year—costing victims millions of dollars in financial losses and leaving them vulnerable to identity theft. Be mindful when holiday shopping this year.

Fake Websites and Apps

Scammers regularly create fake websites and shopping apps that either mimic other popular retailers or offer much lower prices than competitors. The aim of the scammer is for you to shop on their site or app so they can capture your payment and personal information. They will take your money and your info, but you will never receive the product you "purchased".

Scammers also create fake shopping apps that when you download them can either steal your personal information or lock your device and hold it for ransom until you pay the scammers to give you access again. Some apps may ask you to login using your email or social media accounts, so the scammers can steal that login information.

Fraudulent Links

Avoid clicking links that appear in unsolicited emails, texts, or through social media. Often, these links lead to illegitimate websites that scammers use to capture your payment and personal information. Some links may download malware onto your device that scammers can then use to capture logins, passwords, and credit/debit card numbers.

Making Secure Payments

When making purchase payments online, make sure that the website has "https" at the start of the URL and includes a lock symbol. This indicates that the website has a protected network connection. When there is no "s" at the end of "http", the website is vulnerable to scammers who can steal credit/debit card information.

Protect Yourself

- Always be wary of websites or apps that ask for suspicious permissions such as access to your text messages, photos, contacts, stored passwords, or stored credit/debit card info
- Always look out for solicitations, websites, or apps that have typos, mistakes, misspellings, or have branding that is different from the legitimate company they claim to represent
- Be wary of any offers or pricing that seems too good to be true. Scam websites will often price popular items significantly below legitimate retailers to entice you. If the price or offer seems too good to be true, it's very likely a scam
- When shopping on a website, be wary of any pop-ups that appear asking for your credit/debit card or personal information so that you can get a discount or enter to win free prizes.
- If you are purchasing from a company or website for the first time, do your research on the company/website and look into company reviews or search the company name and add "review", "scam", or "complaint"
- Be suspicious if asked to pay using nonconventional methods such as wire transfer, gift cards, crypto, etc.
- Consider using a third-party payment service (such as PayPal, etc.) for shopping on new or unfamiliar websites. These services protect you by ensuring that the retailer never sees your credit/debit card number, CVV, or account information. Many third-party services also offer protection if the product you buy never arrives, arrives damaged, or is different than what you intended to purchase

Be careful and be safe when shopping online this holiday season!

SPOT CHARITY IMPERSONATOR SCAMS

During the holiday season, scammers impersonate all kinds of organizations, including reputable charities. These impersonators often make you believe that you won a charity-sponsored sweepstakes because you've made a donation to charity. So, if you are contacted about a sweepstakes contest you've supposedly won from someone who

claims to be from the charity you support, how can you tell if the prize is real or a scam?

- The moment someone tells you that you need to pay to claim your prize, you know you're dealing with a scam.
- If someone tells you that they need your sensitive personal information, including Social Security number to process your winnings, you know you're dealing with a scam.
- Real prizes are free (if the charity gives prizes).

Protect Yourself:

- Scammers might use real charities' names or names that sound close to legitimate charities when they contact you or if they place ads (including pop-up ads) on the internet or on social media.
- Do research to be sure you're dealing with the legitimate charity and search online for the name of the charity plus words like "review", "scam", or "complaint". Be sure to scroll past the paid ads to ensure you're getting legitimate search results.
- Scammers can easily fake caller ID. Don't trust it, even if it shows the company/charity name. If you intend to contact that organization, always look up the contact number yourself.
- Legitimate sweepstakes are free and by chance. It's illegal to ask you to pay or make a purchase to enter or to increase your odds of winning.
- Never pay to "get" your prize. If you do, you'll only end up losing money... and get even more calls, mail, texts, and spam about sweepstakes.

Beware of fraudulent scams targeting those who give!

Always remember this when you receive a solicitation through text, phone, email, or social media – if it sounds strange, don't engage!

Visit our website **www.scamsquadsav.org** to check for other scams and alerts. You can also contact the GVSAV Scam Squad by calling 520-351-

6715 Monday through Thursday 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM. To report an incident of fraud (money lost to a scam) call 911 or 520-351-4900. You can also visit our Facebook page at **www.facebook.com/GVSAV**.

Santa Rita Fire District

THANKSGIVING SAFETY SEASON

Thanksgiving is a time to gather with family and friends, enjoy delicious food, and give thanks. As we prepare for the holiday festivities, the Santa Rita Fire District reminds everyone that a few simple safety precautions can help prevent fires, injuries, and accidents.

Cooking and Fire Safety

Did you know? Thanksgiving is the number one day of the year for home cooking fires in the United States!

- Never leave cooking food unattended
- Keep towels, decorations, and other flammable items away from the stove
- Keep children and pets at least 3 feet away from cooking areas
- Never use water to extinguish a grease fire
- Use extreme caution with turkey fryers. Oil-filled fryers can cause serious fires and burns
- Have fire extinguishers ready, and check the expiration date. A residential fire extinguisher will last about 10 years
- Ensure that you have working smoke alarms. Call the SRFD for more information on smoke alarms or the smoke alarm/battery replacement program

Food Safety Matters

- Never thaw a turkey on the kitchen counter
- Do not wash a raw turkey, as this can spread harmful bacteria
- Cook turkey to an internal temperature of 165 F

- Wash hands regularly and sanitize surfaces after handling raw poultry
- Refrigerate leftovers within two hours and consume refrigerated leftovers within four days

Make Your Home Guest-Friendly

- Keep walkways, stairs, and entryways clear and well-lit
- Secure rugs and remove tripping hazards, especially for older guests
- Look our for any cracked tiles, broken steps, or other floor areas needing repair
- Keep harmful foods away from pets

Travel Safety

- Inspect your vehicle before heading out
- Allow extra travel time and avoid distractions
- Always buckle up and never drive impaired or drowsy
- Be mindful of medications that can cause drowsiness or affect alertness

"This Thanksgiving, we are grateful for the wonderful community we serve. As you celebrate with loved ones, remember that safety is one of the greatest gifts we can share. From our fire family to yours, have a safe, joyful, and happy Thanksgiving!"