

# CONSUMER ALERT

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

[datcp.wi.gov](http://datcp.wi.gov)



## Consumer Alert: DATCP Sees Rise in Antivirus Subscriptions Email Scams

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MADISON, Wisc. –Wisconsin consumers are receiving an increasing number of fake antivirus emails from scammers. In the past year, the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) received three times the number of complaints from consumers who have lost money to this scam as in the prior year.

These emails often falsely claim that the recipient’s subscription to antivirus software has been automatically renewed, and their bank account will be charged several hundred dollars. The email provides a phony customer service number to call and cancel. Scammers wait for people to call them and take advantage of those who provide their credit card information, account numbers, passwords, and other information. They have also been known to ask recipients to download a file.

Reports to DATCP’s Bureau of Consumer Protection indicate that these phony emails have eventually led to scammers accessing victims’ computers through downloaded files, pop-up windows, or web addresses provided over the phone. Once they have access they can install malware, block you from your files, and steal your financial information.

If you receive a similar email, be wary. Delete the email and do not call any numbers provided in the email. If you have an antivirus subscription and have questions about its status, contact the company through a trusted contact method.

### **Keep scammers away with these simple tips:**

- If you receive a suspicious email, delete it. Do not call the phone number listed on the email and do not click on any links. Suspicious emails may come from questionable email addresses unrelated to the company, contain grammatical and spelling errors, include a fake invoice, and/or ask you to confirm some personal information.
- Never give out passwords to a stranger on the phone.
- Never allow remote access to your computer unless you have initiated contact with a trusted source.
- Do not give out personal information such as date of birth, social security number, credit card numbers, or bank account numbers.

If you have been the victim of a scam, report it by filing a complaint online at [datcp.wi.gov/pages/programs\\_services/fileconsumercomplaint.aspx](http://datcp.wi.gov/pages/programs_services/fileconsumercomplaint.aspx), send an email to [DATCPHotline@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DATCPHotline@wisconsin.gov), or call DATCP’s Consumer Protection Hotline at 1-800-422-7128.

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