

CONSUMER ALERT

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

datcp.wi.gov



Consumer Alert: Increase in Wisconsin Lottery-related Scams

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MADISON, Wis. – The Bureau of Consumer Protection has observed an increase in calls and complaints from consumers who received scam texts and emails involving the Wisconsin Lottery. The messages, claiming to be from recent Powerball winners, tell the recipient they would like to share a portion of their winnings in an attempt to coax consumers into giving away their personal information and sensitive data. This practice is known as a *phishing* scam, and may target specific individuals or thousands of people at once. Most phishing occurs via email and text, but phishers are always trying new methods to deceive their targets.

This phishing attempt appears to be occurring nationwide. Consumers should be aware that these text and email messages are not sent from the Wisconsin Lottery nor the alleged Powerball winners. If you receive an unsolicited text or email stating Powerball or other lottery winners want to share their winnings:

- Do not call any phone number provided in the text or email.
- Do not click any links or open attachments in the text or email. These may contain viruses or malware that could be installed onto your device without your permission or knowledge.
- If you have previously provided any personal identifying information or sensitive data, consider checking your credit report at annualcreditreport.com. Look for suspicious and fraudulent activity and report any you find to your state’s consumer protection office.
- If you believe you may be victim to a phishing scam, consider putting a security alert or credit freeze in place with all three credit bureaus: Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion.
- If you clicked on a link in a suspicious email or text, you may want to have your device scanned for viruses and malware at a reputable computer or cell phone repair establishment.
- Practice caution with any message asking you to provide gift cards, wire transfers, or mobile payment app transactions. Do not pay any taxes or fees associated with the winnings or shared money.

For additional information and consumer protection resources, visit the Consumer Protection webpage on DATCP’s website datcp.wi.gov. If you have questions or believe you have been the victim of a scam, report it by calling DATCP’s Consumer Protection Hotline at 1-800-422-7128 or emailing DATCPHotline@wi.gov.

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