

September 14, 2006

SUBJECT: Fraudulent E-Mail Claims to Be From the FDIC

Summary: *E-mails that fraudulently claim to be from the FDIC are requesting that recipients provide highly sensitive personal information, including bank account information.*

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) has become aware of other e-mails appearing to be from the FDIC asking recipients to register for a “SON – Secure Online Network” code. The e-mail requests that recipients click on a hyperlink to initiate “SON” registration in an attempt to acquire the recipients’ personal financial information. These e-mails are fraudulent and were not sent by the FDIC. Financial institutions and consumers should NOT access the link provided within the body of these e-mails and should NOT, under any circumstances, provide any personal financial information through this media.

The fraudulent e-mails describe a fictitious relationship between the FDIC and GoldLeaf Financial Solutions and suggest that the FDIC collaborated in the development of SON. The e-mails state that “SON”:

- is “dedicated to protect payment cards against online fraud”;
- “assigns a unique code to a payment card, therefore replacing random parts of the personal information”; and
- is “required for FDIC claims as it is part of the FDIC’s new set of standards.”

Variations of the e-mails have been reported. For example, at least three different subject lines are currently being used, including “Urgent Notification - Security Reminder,” “Online Access Agreement Update,” and “SON Registration.” Some versions of the fraudulent e-mails include a salutation of “Dear FDIC beneficiary,” while other versions include the recipient’s name and e-mail address after the word “Dear.” Some versions of the e-mails include the recipient’s name and mailing address and a statement that “your personal information did not match any SON code.” Other subject lines and modifications to the e-mails may occur over time.

Consumers should be aware that other similar e-mails may be sent that falsely claim to be from the FDIC. The FDIC does not directly contact consumers in this manner nor does the FDIC request personal financial information from consumers.