DON'T be a Victim to Cybercrimes - Tips to Avoid of Ransomware

Recently, the world saw the biggest ever cyber-attack in Internet history. Ransomware named "WannaCry" stormed its way through the World Wide Web, and encrypted the files of thousands of computers throughout the world, thereby rendering all the data useless. In order to regain access to this encrypted information, users are instructed to pay a ransom, otherwise lose that data forever.

"WannaCry" has infected a variety of businesses sectors, health care providers, as well as average citizens. Effects of ransomware to business and health care providers can range anywhere from a minor annoyance to a major disruption of critical services. The effect on the average person is also disruptive but given the integration of computers into family life, they are not just a tool used to create documents and handle personal finances, they are the repositories that store family photos and videos of baby's first steps.

In order to protect your digital assets, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department wish to give you several tips that may keep you from falling victim to "WannaCry" and other computer viruses:

• Make sure you have backup copies of critical files. This is probably the most important thing you can do to fight against ransomware. Most institutions that pay ransomware criminals are those whose only options are pay or live without the data. By having a backup copy (preferably not on the same network and in a separate location) you now have the option of wiping out your computer's hard drive, reinstalling your operating system, and restoring your critical files. This robs the criminals of power over you and takes away their incentive to continue on to other victims.

• Regularly update your operating system, browser, antivirus, and other programs. Culprits tend to exploit vulnerabilities in software to compromise systems. Operating systems as well as most software applications have the ability to automatically check if software updates are available. Consider activating these features and take the time to update them as soon as you know about them.

• Don't run your computer as an administrator. When you run your computer as an administrator, every program you run has unlimited access to your computer. If ransomware or other malicious code finds its way onto your computer, it also gains unlimited access. Consider running your computer under a standard user account as this will limit malicious codes ability to install itself on your computer.

• Don't interact with spam email or email from unknown senders. By clicking links or opening suspicious attachments, you could be inviting ransomware, or other malware, onto your computer. Consider deleting it without opening it.

• Avoid suspicious sites and downloads. Web sites that illegally promise free software, music, and movies are often bait to lure in unsuspecting victims.

• If you are infected by ransomware or any other virus, disconnect it from your network. This will contain the problem to just one machine and limit its spread throughout your network. Be sure to unplug network cables as well as disable Wi-Fi connections.

**• If your files get encrypted, don't pay the ransom. Unless the instant access to some of your files is critical, don't pay the ransom. Each payment fuels this unlawful business which only prospers as long as people pay money.**


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## SAN DIMAS STATION

San Dimas Sheriff's Station is one of six stations within the East Patrol Division of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. The Station's jurisdiction encompasses approximately 276 square miles. In addition to serving the City of San Dimas, the station serves unincorporated communities of Azusa, Covina, Glendora, La Verne, Claremont, Pomona, the Los Angeles County portion of Mt. Baldy, a large portion of the Angeles National Forest (State Route 39), and portions of Angeles Crest Highway (Highway 2). The population for these areas is approximately one hundred and five thousand (105,000), nearly sixty sixty-nine thousand (69,000) in the unincorporated areas and more than thirty-six thousand (36,000) in the City of San Dimas.

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And/or, in the City of San Dimas, Code Red

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The **San Dimas Booster Club** was established in 1991 to provide a means to raise money for the needs of <u>auxiliary personnel and volunteers</u> who work at the San Dimas Station. The Booster Club has provided thousands of dollars for the purchase of equipment and supplies and to provide specialized training and education to volunteers. Virtually all of the funding for these programs is through the efforts of the Booster Club, as neither the Sheriff's Department nor the County of Los Angeles provides a budget for these services. The San Dimas Sheriff's Booster Club continues the proud tradition of meeting the needs of the volunteer/reserve program at the San Dimas Sheriff's Station. The Booster Club consists of people like yourself - residents, merchants, and business owners - who band together to make a positive difference in our community. The Booster Club members and the Board of Directors are very proud of their accomplishments and invite you to join them in making this important program even more successful. Please visit our website at: www.sdmsheriffsboosters.org.


Alert LA County: Telephone emergency mass notification system
http://www.lacounty.gov/wps/portal/alertla
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"If You See Something, Say Something"
LA Crime Stoppers: Partner to prevent or report crime by contacting your local Sheriff's station. Or if you wish to remain Anonymous, call "LA Crime Stoppers" by dialing 800-222-TIPS (8477), texting the letters TIPLA plus your tip to CRIMES (274637), or using the website http://lacrimestoppers.org


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**Jim McDonnell, Sheriff**
**Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department**