CONSUMER ALERT

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

datcp.wi.gov

Send Shipping Scammers Packing

Release Date: **December 6, 2016**

Media Contact: **Jerad Albracht, 608-224-5007**
Bill Cosh, Communications Director, 608-224-5020

MADISON – 'Tis the season for brown cardboard boxes! Online shopping is expected to be a major factor in holiday spending this year, and with all of that e-commerce comes pile upon pile of packages and a flurry of purchase and delivery confirmation emails. In between those legitimate messages, however, scammers may slip fraudulent emails that use fake shipping or delivery alerts as their bait. These phony emails are linked to malware or are ploys to gather your personal or financial information.

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection warns consumers to be on the lookout for these phony shipping emails and to avoid clicking links or opening attachments in these messages.

"Scammers send fake shipping emails throughout the year, but the flood of legitimate e-commerce-related emails that consumers might be expecting over the holidays creates an opportunity for them to increase their email output and try to sneak their malicious messages into your inbox," said Frank Frassetto, Division Administrator for Trade and Consumer Protection. "Because scammers aren't picky about who they send their spam messages to, you should be on the lookout for these problematic emails even if you don't shop online and aren't expecting a shipment."

Look out for emails or texts that warn you about a problem with a delivery, that ask for account information for security purposes, or that ask you to open an attached "shipment label" in order to claim a package from a local office. Scammers often use the names, logos and color schemes of major shipping companies and retailers to add legitimacy to their messages, and they may also spoof the company's web address (URL) in the sender's email address.

If you are expecting a shipment that may be delayed, contact the shipper directly to inquire. Some e-commerce companies offer package tracking features right on their websites.

Here are some common elements to look for in fake shipping scams:

- Poor grammar and spelling errors in emails that claim to come from major organizations. If the message is sloppy, it likely did not come from a legitimate business.
- Sender addresses that don't match the URL for the company that supposedly sent the email. For example, the "From:" line in a recent fake FedEx email noted that the email came from "Brenda" and gave an Italian email address, not a fedex.com address (see example on next page).
- Shipment emails that lack specifics about the sender or the package's supposed contents.
- Emails asking you to open an attachment in order to review an order. Never open an attachment in an unsolicited or questionable email.
- Emails containing threats that a package will be returned to the sender and you will be charged a fee for not responding to the message.

In actuality, there is no product waiting for delivery, and the alarming language in these emails is intended to make recipients act quickly without considering consequences. By clicking on any of the links in the email, a recipient risks downloading malware or handing over personal information to the scammers. If you receive a similar email, delete it and do not click any of the links contained anywhere in the message.

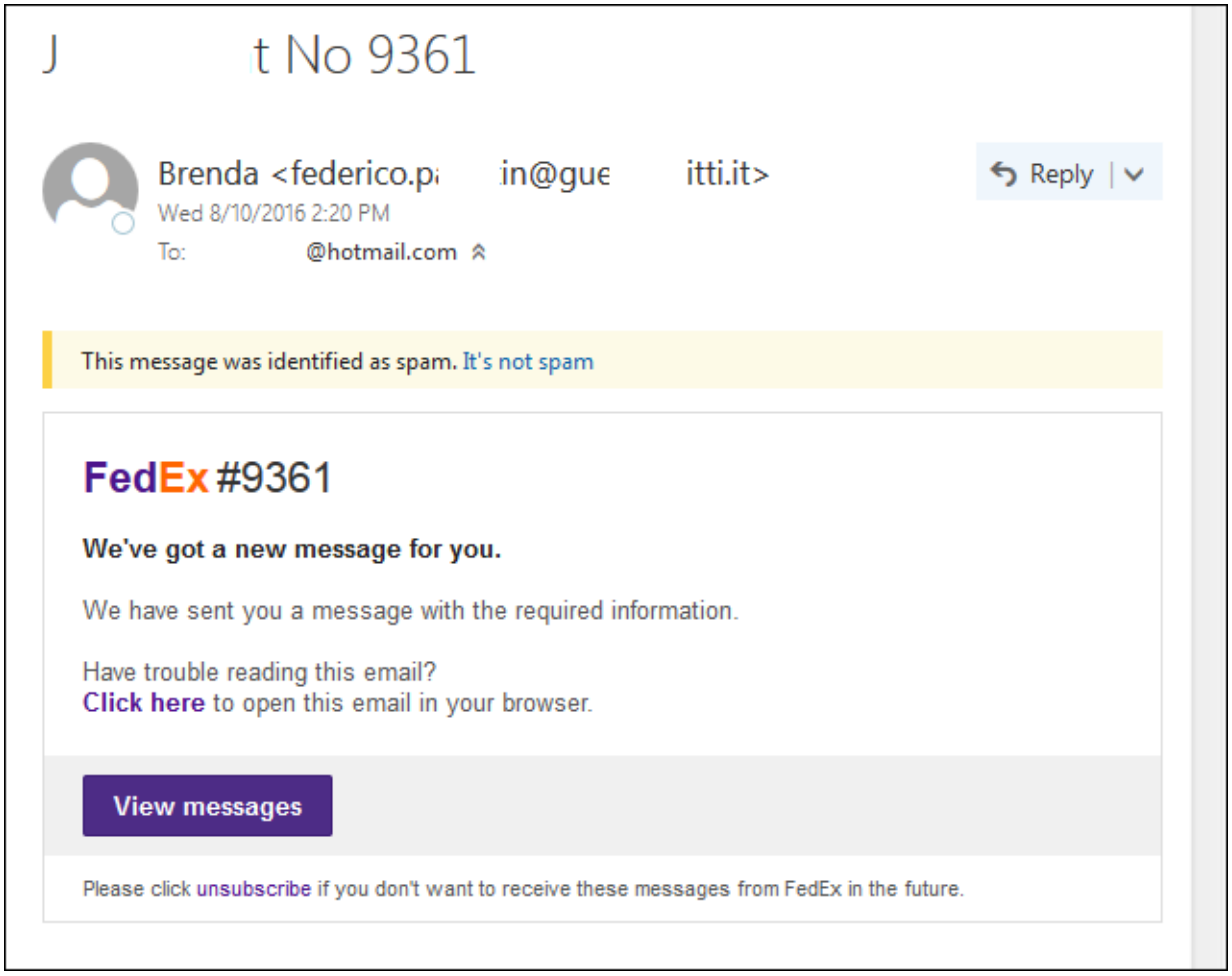
(MORE)

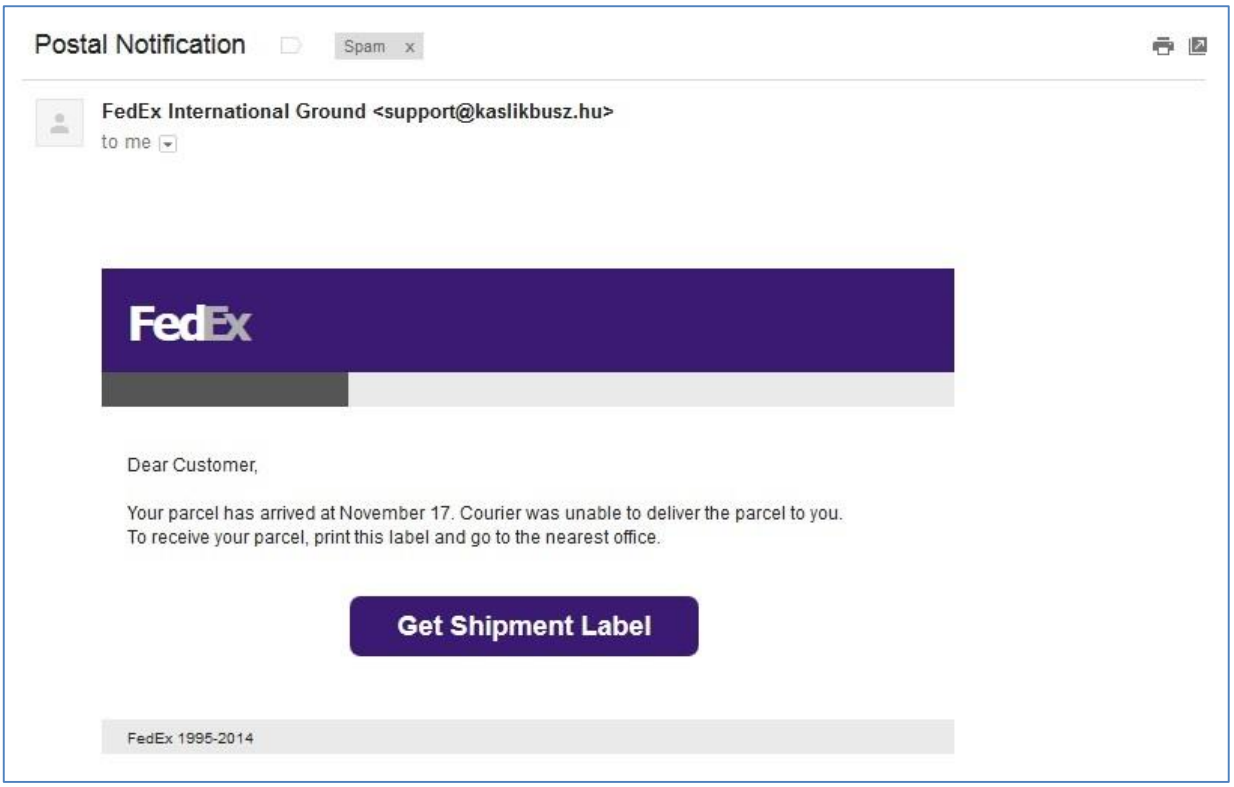
For additional information or to file a complaint, visit the Consumer Protection Bureau at datcp.wisconsin.gov, call the Consumer Protection Hotline at 800-422-7128 or send an e-mail to datcphotline@wisconsin.gov.

Connect with us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/wiconsumer.

###

Screenshots of fake shipping emails (included links are inactive):




Postal Notification
Spam
FedEx International Ground <support@kaslikbusz.hu>
to me
FedEx
Dear Customer,
Your parcel has arrived at November 17. Courier was unable to deliver the parcel to you.
To receive your parcel, print this label and go to the nearest office.
Get Shipment Label
FedEx 1995-2014