

FRAUD ALERT!

From the Office of Jefferson/Gilpin Counties
District Attorney Scott Storey

Computer Caution

On June 16, 2007, the FBI announced that they had discovered and were going to inform over 1 million home computer users that their computer had been hijacked to become a **botnet**. Botnets are created by hackers and malware writers who infect computers with viruses and Trojans that let them remotely control and take over a computer. They amass untold numbers of zombie computers from which they launch massive waves of spam, malware, 'phishing' attacks, denial-of-service attacks, identity theft, and to hide images of child pornography. Owners of these zombie computers generally have no awareness or sign that their computer is infected and controlled, at will, by someone else. The computer will typically operate normally; sometimes it will operate considerably slower when infected.

There is an insidious Post Script to this problem. The FBI warns that there will most likely be scam campaigns where con artists pose as FBI agents asking for information about you and your 'infected' computer so they can assist to cure your problem.

A few suggestions:

- ✓ If you have a high-speed Internet connection, turn off your computer when not in use;
- ✓ The FBI will not contact victims online concerning this issue. Remember that a government agency, your bank and/or credit card company will not contact you by E-mail concerning financial or personal issues;
- ✓ Make sure you have a good firewall installed and that it is turned on. Personal Computer magazine (www.pcmag.com) may be a source to evaluate firewall programs. Additionally, the Website for the Kim Komando National Radio Computer Program (www.komando.com) will compare computer products and offer free downloads;
- ✓ Trend Micro, a computer software company, will provide a free analysis of your computer (they ask for a donation to a charity). Go to www.trendmicro.com and click on the 'Housecalls' icon. They will remotely scan your computer for viruses and other damaging infections.

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For more assistance, call the
Fraud Hotline: 303-271-6980

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