



March 30, 2016

Subject:
ALERT from Tim Gillen: Ransomware Threat!

Hello, Tim Gillen here from Terrapin Networks. I don't usually send a message like this out unless it is critically important, and this one is.

By now likely you've heard of 'ransomware' – a particular form of virus whereby the attacker encrypts files on a computer (or network server) and will only de-encrypt if a ransom is paid.

These are real, and can cause incredible damage – and they have exploded over the last several months.

The most common way the virus is distributed is through email attachments.

For this reason, pay special attention to not opening email attachments, unless you specifically expected the attachment from the person sending the email.

Many times the email will look like it comes from someone you know (it will be 'spoofed'), so still be careful even when the 'sender' looks familiar.

Other common methods are emails from UPS, FedEx, or the post office; an 'invoice attached' email; a 'fax' sent through email; or a 'job application' or resume.

These are usually MS Word or Excel documents, and will require you to 'enable macros'.

DO NOT open these emails, and especially do not open the attachment.

The damage happens very quickly. If you think you may have opened an attachment as I have described, please power down your computer immediately and contact our Help Desk (231-941-2100, HelpDesk@terrapin.tech)

If you receive one of these emails, delete the email using shift-delete (this permanently deletes the email).

And while email is the most common 'attack vector', dodgy web sites can also be a threat.

Anti-virus programs and email spam filtering have a difficult time catching these attacks. *Your personal vigilance is the best protection.*

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If you have any questions or comments, I am happy to help. In the meantime: be careful!

Tim

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Business Technology Specialist | President

Terrapin Networks :: design | protect | optimize
Traverse City, Michigan | 231.941.2100 | New web: <http://terrapiin.tech>
New email: timsr@terrapiin.tech | Connect with me on [LinkedIn](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

Reference links:

[How to recognize phishing/malware/ransomware email links](#)

[Recent news on hospitals, schools, and churches being affected by ransomware](#)

Also [here](#)

[A 4-minute video that describes how these threats work](#)

[Ransomware described](#) (University of North Carolina)

[“Cyber Thugs Taking Data Hostage” article](#)

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