

City of OKC warns of phising scams, fraudulent payment requests

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The City of Oklahoma City is warning residents, developers and business owners to beware of fraudulent payment emails.

Some permit or other development applicants have received scam emails claiming they owe money to the City before their application can be approved or processed, a City press release warned. While these messages may look legitimate, and even include information about an actual project or application, applicants should verify any unexpected invoice directly with the City.

"City of OKC invoices will only come

directly from official City sources or directly from the City staff working with the applicant," the news release said.

In-person invoice payments can be made at the James Couch Municipal Building, and online payments should only be made through the OKC Citizen Portal.

How to detect a potential scam

With the rise of artificial intelligence, phishing scams have become more and more convincing. The City of OKC shared a list of cautions to be taken when receiving emails about City payments.

- Check the sender's email address. Official City of Oklahoma City email ad-

resses end in @okc.gov. Be cautious of addresses that look similar but contain misspellings, extra letters or a different website domain.

- Be suspicious of urgent payment requests and/or wire transfers. Scammers may claim a payment must be made immediately to avoid delays, penalties or denial of an application.

- Don't rely on how professional an email looks. Scam emails and invoices could include the City seal, signatures, project information and professional language.

- Be cautious of unusual payment instructions. Verify any request to send money using a payment method or account you have not previously used with the City.

- Don't click unexpected payment links. Instead, go directly to the City's website or payment portal using an address you know is legitimate.

- Verify when in doubt. If an invoice or email seems unusual, contact the City using the contact information on OKC.gov rather than replying to the message or using the phone number provided in the suspicious email.

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