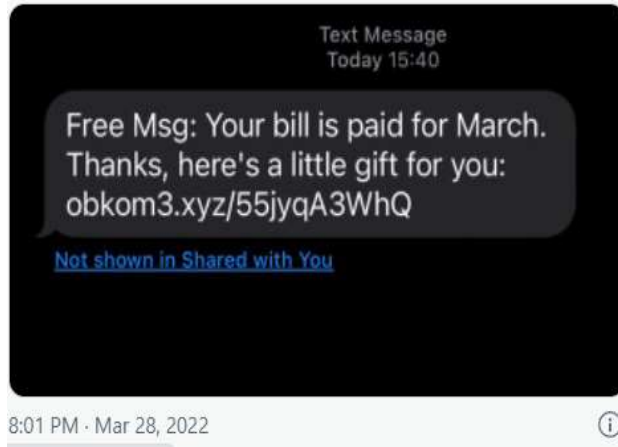


**SCAMS REPORT**  
**MILTON TOWNSHIP S.A.L.T. COUNCIL MEETING MAY 9, 2022**

Submitted by Arnold H. Shifrin

**Self-Text Message Scam (aka “Smishing”)**

**How it works:** You receive a text message on your cell phone that appears to originate from your own phone number. The message states that your bill for the current month is paid. You're thanked for your payment and instructed to click on a link in the message to receive a free gift. Following is an example of the text message you might receive:



If you click on the link, you will be directed to a scammer's website and prompted to provide your personal and financial information in order to receive your gift. Scammers can also infect your phone with malicious software which allows them to monitor your phone activity and steal your personal information.

Many victims who received a text message from their own phone number reported that they mistakenly believed it was a legitimate message from their cell phone carrier. As a result, they didn't hesitate to comply with the instructions and, in so doing, lost large sums of money they couldn't recover. **WARNING:** If you receive a text message from your phone number that you did not send to yourself, you are dealing with a scammer trying to steal your personal information.

**How to protect yourself:**

- Immediately delete any text messages you receive from your phone number that you did not send. Do not click on any links and do not reply to the messages.
- Make sure your cell phone's software and apps include the latest updates.
- Consider blocking text messages from your phone number. **NOTE:** If your practice is to text shopping lists, reminders, or other notes to yourself, you'll no longer be able to do so if you block text messages from your phone number.
- Forward text messages from your phone number to your mobile carrier at "SPAM" (7726). Your carrier may elect to begin an investigation.
- If you are a victim of this scam, report it to the following agencies:
  - Your local police department;
  - Federal Trade Commission ([reportfraud.ftc.gov](https://www.ftc.gov));
  - Illinois Attorney General's Senior Fraud Hotline (1-800-243-5377); and
  - Better Business Bureau ([bbb.org](https://www.bbb.org)).

Information from victims helps identify trends and assists prosecutors in establishing cases against criminals.

*[Source: ABC News]*