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Beware Of Spyware Extortion

10.27.2004 @ 04:31 AM PT | [Ken Harthun](#) | [Comment](#) | [Send to Friends](#)
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You're surfing a new site you just heard about (or you've opened an email) when you receive a pop-up saying "Your computer may be infected with spyware". Not thinking, you click the "Scan Now" button. You start getting deluged with popups trying to goad you into buying a "cleaner" to get rid of all the popups. You've just become the target of a rogue anti-spyware program's extortion attempt.

OK. So maybe you're smarter than that. But this scenario happens every day to countless unsuspecting home and business computer users. Spyware Warrior's [Rogue/Suspect Anti-Spyware Products & Web Sites](#) lists 112 separate applications that "may use unfair, deceptive, high pressure sales tactics " to "scare up sales from gullible, confused users" or to goad you into parting with your money for the "protection" they offer—protection that is mostly useless.

[Spyware Warrior](#) reports that many programs use "*false positives...as goad to purchase*", *the apps in question produced inexcusable false positives on a "spyware-free" system...and then demanded payment to clean that non-existent "spyware"/"adware."*

Bookmark the site and be sure you study it well. Refer to it if you are presented with any popup or email offering "free" scans for spyware. And tell everyone you know—the only way to fight these crooks is to take the profit out of their efforts by refusing to succumb to their protection racket.



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