

Dear Stewart Partners,

The first full week of June brought us our first heat wave of the season! The hot weather, however, hasn't seemed to cool the residential real estate market. We've heard stories reported in the news that as part of an offer submission, prospective purchasers agreed to name their first child after the sellers if their offers were accepted. These stories sound almost unbelievable, except I'm sure all of you have similar stories that you could share about this crazy and unusual housing market we are finding ourselves in.

As you all know, Governor Baker's declared State of Emergency is ending next week. Given that many businesses and offices will be returning to more in-person office hours, we've updated our Registry of Deeds spreadsheet with the latest information. Check out the details and the link below. We also want to alert you to a new social engineering scam that is making the rounds. Lastly, as a reminder, Jutta R. Deeney, Stewart's New England Regional Underwriting Counsel, will be speaking at a REBA sponsored webinar next week. The topic will be Nominee Trusts.

- *Registry of Deeds – Operations Update*

Many registries have reopened to the public; however, access isn't universal and most registries are still not permitting closings to occur. We've updated our Massachusetts Registry Information spreadsheet with the latest information and have included website links and telephone numbers for your convenience. We've attached our updated document to this email for easy reference and will post to our local website for easy access. <https://www.stewart.com/content/stewart/stewartcom/en/stg/massachusetts/underwriting-resources/forms-policy-information/covid-19-info-resources.html>

- *Social Engineering Scam & Malware – Be on the Lookout!*

We were recently alerted to a social engineering scam that is making the rounds. The scam uses real people in a call center to trick you into downloading malware onto your computer. Here's how the scam works:

You receive an email claiming that your trial subscription to a publishing company will expire soon. The email states that you will be charged if the subscription is not canceled, and directs you to call a phone number for assistance. If you call this number, a representative happily walks you through an online process so that you can unsubscribe and not be charged. The representative directs you to a generic-sounding web address, asks you to enter the account number provided in the original email, and tells you to click a button labeled "Unsubscribe." This sounds harmless, except if you click the unsubscribe icon, an excel file is downloaded onto your computer. The representative tells you to open that file and enable macros so you can read a confirmation number to them. If you enable macros, a malicious file is installed that allows cybercriminals backdoor access to your system. The criminals perpetrating the scam can use this access to install more dangerous malware, such as ransomware.

Follow these tips to stay safe from this social engineering attack:

- This attack tries to spark feelings of alarm and frustration by claiming that you will be charged for something you didn't sign up for.
 - Remember that cyber attacks come from real people and real people can lie over the phone, just as they do in phishing emails.
 - If you're concerned that a warning could be legitimate, look up the company and try contacting them another way—not by using the phone number that they provided in an email.
- [Stewart's Underwriters – out and about](#)

Jutta R. Deeney will be speaking at webinar event hosted by REBA's Paralegal and Estate Planning Sections with David S. Raymon, Esq. The program is scheduled for Wednesday, June 16th at noon. The program is entitled "Build Your Nominee Trust Knowledge." Details and registration information can be found on REBA's website at www.reba.net

- [Stewart's Massachusetts COVID-19 Resource Page](#)

Please view our resource page which contains all the local information relative to underwriting guidance, affidavits, registry closures and frequently asked questions. This site will be updated regularly. To access click [HERE](#) and make it a favorite on your web-browser. You can also copy the following URL and paste it into your web browser:

<https://www.stewart.com/content/stewart/stewartcom/en/stg/massachusetts/underwriting-resources/forms-policy-information/covid-19-info-resources.html>

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