

October 2015 Fraud Alert!

Spooing Scammers

The staff at Bucks County Consumer Protection, continue to receive complaints about intrusive, telemarketing telephone calls. Some of the calls reported are from legitimate telemarketers while others are from scam artists trying to get your money or your personal information.

Scammers will attempt to get personal information from you and turn around and sell your information on the internet on what is referred to as a “talker list”. Bucks Co Consumer Protection speaks with numerous residents, on a daily basis, that may have had a “polite” conversation with one of these criminals or some have admitted to play along with the scammers by leading them on with no intentions of purchasing or buying anything from them.

However, it is important to remember that, in today's world of the Internet, personal information has great monetary value. In the pre-internet age if you had a conversation and shared personal information such as your profession, your relatives, such as grandchildren, and how far away they live, the risk of doing so was minimal or nonexistent. Demographic and other travel information is valuable to scammers; for example- you have a time share in Atlantic City. That information, shared with the wrong person, could potentially be put up for sale on the internet on what they call the “dark web” and will include your name, address, and telephone number.

The more information that these criminals are able to collect, the more money scammers will pay them for that information to be added to the “talker list”. Once they have that information, a devious scammer will call a victim using a spoofing device. That is a device that will trick your caller ID to show a fake name and telephone number. These spoofing devices are a major reason why you may have seen a rise in phone calls from different states and areas from which you do not know anyone. Many of these scammers are likely calling from out of the country using this spoofing device to trick caller ID.

Bucks County Consumer Protection would like to recommend you do the following to allow yourself the best protection from these scams; register your telephone number(s) on the Do Not Call list at www.donotcall.gov or call 1-888-382-1222 from the phone that you want to register. If you're not sure if you are signed up, sign up again. Once you are registered on the do not call list, you can then be assured that if you get a telemarketer call it's either a legitimate company violating your request to not call you or it is a scam artist. If you have caller ID and do not recognize the number as anyone you know or do business with, let the voice mail system answer the call. If you do answer the call and it is a telemarketer, we recommend that you politely end the call by saying something like “no thank you, I'm not interested” and hang up.

For a brochure about a variety of scams please visit www.buckscounty.org/docs/community-services-documents/elderfraudbooklet02-2012.pdf?sfvrsn=2

If you do not have internet access, please call Bucks County Consumer Protection at 215-348-6060 to request a copy of this brochure and provide your name and mailing address.

Fraud Alerts brought to you by:

BUCKS COUNTY CRIMES AGAINST OLDER ADULTS TASK FORCE

Bucks County District Attorney's Office

215-348-6344

Bucks County Area Agency on Aging

215-348-0510

Bucks County Coroner's Office

215-348-3852

Network of Victim Assistance (NOVA)

1-800-675-6900

A Woman's Place (AWP)

1-800-220-8116

Bucks County Office of Consumer Protection

215-348-6060

Bucks County Register of Wills

215-348-6265

www.crimesagainstolderadultsbucks.org

24 - HOUR HOTLINE: 1-800-490-8505