



NEWS

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.
See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).

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FCC ANNOUNCES NATIONAL FRAUD AWARENESS WEEK ACTIVITIES

Washington, DC – The Federal Communications Commission is recognizing National Fraud Awareness Week (August 4th – 10th) by highlighting five topics on which it receives many inquiries and complaints from consumers. One topic will be addressed each day. Not all are frauds or scams, but all are issues about which consumers should be informed.

K. Dane Snowden, Chief of the FCC Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau, kicked off the FCC's awareness activities by noting, "Chairman Powell has often said that everything we do at the FCC is about consumers. One of the most crucial things we do is inform consumers about telecom products and services to help them make educated choices and avoid unpleasant surprises. National Fraud Awareness Week is an excellent time to focus our attention on this important part of our work."

The first topic is definitely a scam:

THE DO-NOT-CALL-LIST "VERIFICATION" SCAM

Your phone rings in the middle of dinner. You race to answer it, but the caller is neither a friend nor family member. It's a stranger -- a telemarketer -- trying to sell you a product or service.

This scenario is probably repeated in hundreds of thousands of homes each evening, creating increasing annoyance on the part of consumers who then seek out ways to identify and avoid telemarketing calls. Caller ID is one way. Also, some states now sponsor "Do-Not-Call" registries for consumers who want to block some telemarketing calls. However, these registries have spawned a new scam that feeds on the increasing frustration consumers have with telemarketers.

How the scam works:

- You receive a telephone call from someone claiming to be an official of a state Do-Not-Call registry or of an antifraud consumer group. The caller asks if you

want to be on a state Do-Not-Call list or to verify your previous registration on such a list.

- Eventually, the caller asks for personal information, like your Social Security, credit card and/or bank account numbers, to confirm that the caller is talking with the correct person.
- Armed with your personal information, the perpetrator can access your accounts and personal records, and often uses this access to steal money, make unauthorized purchases, steal your identity, etc.

What You Should Know:

- Signing up for state-sponsored Do-Not-Call lists is generally initiated by the consumer. It is usually free or requires only a nominal fee.
- Once you are signed up on a state Do-Not-Call registry, there is generally no reason you should receive follow-up calls. You should not need to verify your registration with personal information.
- If the need for follow-up ever does arise, you should never be asked for personal or financial information.

FILING A COMPLAINT

You can file a complaint with the FCC by e-mail (fccinfo@fcc.gov), the Internet (www.fcc.gov/cgb/complaints.html), telephone 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322) voice, 1-888-TELL-FCC (1-888-835-5322) TTY, or mail (Federal Communications Commission, Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau, Consumer Inquiries and Complaints Division, 445 12th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20554).

For information on this and other topics of interest to consumers, visit our Web site at www.fcc.gov/cgb

To receive information on this and other FCC consumer topics through the Commission's electronic subscriber service, click on www.fcc.gov/cgb/emailservice.html.