



Peninsula Detachment Crime Alert

4/3/09 – Phone Scam Using Toll-Free Numbers

Residents in the Peninsula Detachment jurisdiction have reported receiving phone calls which appear legitimate at first then result in a request for credit card information.

The automated call portrays a bank or business organization and states there is a problem with the credit card payment made by the target. A request is made for the target to call a toll-free number to resubmit the payment information.

When the target calls the provided toll-free number, a recording prompts the caller to input credit card information. At the moment credit card information is provided, the target is billed per minute for the duration of the call.

We would like to provide the following reminders for residents to avoid becoming victims:

- If you receive a phone call or email which states there is a problem with your account, use information you already have in your possession to contact the affected business rather than using the contact information provided in the communication. This will allow you to verify if the problem is really a problem and you are really contacting the affected business.
- Do not provide bank account information to someone initiating contact with you. You should always be the person initiating contact when you disclose account information to another party.
- If the caller demands immediate action, this is a strong indicator of a scam. Scammers try to pressure targets to act fast removing opportunities for the target to verify information to avoid a scam.

If you lose money because of a scam like this and need to file a report, you can call our non-emergency reporting number at 253-798-4721, option 1, at any time. If you have other questions or information, you can call the Peninsula Detachment office at 253-798-4940 during normal business hours.