

SCAMS REPORT
MILTON TOWNSHIP S.A.L.T. COUNCIL MEETING FEBRUARY 8, 2021 (VIRTUAL)

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How To Spot A Scammer On The Telephone

1. **Caller ID information:**

- Calls from unusual area codes (e.g., 473, 284, 649) originate from other countries. Unless you stay in touch with someone from abroad, calls from these area codes are scams.
- Calls in which the three numbers immediately following the area code begin with "0" or "1" do not originate from real persons or legitimate businesses. These are scam calls.
- The phone number displayed on your caller ID may not represent the number from which the call originated. Current technology enables scammers to display any number they wish on your caller ID. Calls appearing to be legitimate, therefore, may be scam calls.

2. **Caller's delayed greeting:** If you answer the phone and there's a pause of several seconds before the person on the other end responds, the call was probably made with an automatic dialer rather than by a human. Scammers make thousands of calls with these devices that are never answered. When someone does answer, there is a lapse of time before the caller responds.

3. **Caller's poor communication skills:** Be cautious of callers with a poor command of the English language claiming to represent utility companies or other businesses. Their objective is to trick you into providing personal information or to send them money. Legitimate American companies often use foreign call centers, but their employees are generally adept in English grammar.

4. **Non-existing account:** If a caller claiming to represent a business or utility company contacts you about a past-due balance for an account you don't have, you're dealing with a scammer.

5. **Caller's changed disposition:** At first, scammers appear to be friendly and courteous in order to keep you from becoming suspicious of their motives. As you start to ask questions and appear confrontational, callers often become belligerent and rude and resort to threats to get you to comply with their demands. This conduct is a sure sign of a scam.

6. **Confirmation of your identity:** If a caller asks you at the start of a call to provide personal identifying information (e.g., SSN) in order to verify who you are, you're talking to a scammer.

7. **Caller's generic greeting:** If a caller addresses you generically (e.g., "Hello Citizen"), you are dealing with a scammer making random calls who has no idea who you are. Otherwise, the caller would greet you by your name.

8. **Caller's threats:** If you receive a call from someone claiming to be from the IRS stating that you owe money for back taxes and that you'll be arrested if you don't make immediate payment, you are talking to a scammer. The IRS never makes threatening phone calls to delinquent taxpayers.

9. **Quick action required:** If a caller tells you that you won a lottery or sweepstakes contest and your personal information is required immediately or you'll forfeit your prize, you're dealing with a scammer. If you did enter a legitimate contest and could possibly have won a prize, you should contact the sponsoring company directly for confirmation.

10. **Caller's "canned" responses:** Many scam calls utilize technology that gives the impression you're talking to a human. In fact, you're conversing with an internet "bot" (e.g., robot) which uses a human-sounding recorded voice to provide cued questions and responses. The intent is to trick you into providing personal information which is used to steal your identity or sell to other scammers. You can disrupt the bot's cues and confirm the call is a scam by providing foolish, unrelated answers to the questions that are asked.

[Resources: various]