

SCAM REPORT
MILTON TOWNSHIP S.A.L.T. COUNCIL MEETING FEBRUARY 12, 2024

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Home Security System Scams

Background: Scammers pose as agents of legitimate home security system companies and try to deceive property owners into upgrading or purchasing a new system. The scammers use fake websites, email messages, text messages, and high-pressure door-to-door sales calls to prey upon potential victims. They offer free or highly discounted systems as incentives and pressure victims to act quickly "before prices rise." Scammers cite fabricated high crime statistics to convince victims they need the latest system to protect themselves and their property. Criminals use the personal and financial information of those who invest in a new or upgraded system to steal their identity and remove money from their accounts. Victims never receive the system or upgrade they thought they had purchased.

Signs of a home security system scam

- Unsolicited salespeople who come to your door and try to sell you a security system or inform you that your current system is outdated and needs upgrading are scammers. Legitimate companies do not solicit business in this fashion.
- Salespeople who use high-pressure sales tactics and prod you to act immediately are scammers.
- If you are offered a home security system at no cost or a deeply discounted price, you are dealing with a scammer. Legitimate businesses do not sell free or low-cost systems.

How to avoid being a victim

- Ask for identification from anyone claiming to be from a security company who comes to your door. If they refuse to comply or claim they do not have identification, you are dealing with a scammer
- Do not allow anyone who claims they represent a security company to enter your home until you verify their identity.
- Research a company you are not familiar with before signing a contract. The Better Business Bureau (*bbb.org*) and the Federal Trade Commission (*ftc.gov*) are suggested resources.
- Do not feel forced to act on the spot. Take time to think about all your options before deciding.
- Ask friends, family, and neighbors who have alarm systems for recommendations.
- Get price quotes from several security companies before you sign a sales contract. Thoroughly read the entire contract before you sign it.
- If you decide to purchase or upgrade your system and believe you are dealing with a legitimate company, arrange to make payments in installments and pay with a credit card. If the transaction should turn out to be a scam, your credit card company may help you recover the money you lost.
- You may be asked to sign a long-term contract for professional home monitoring. Since this can be expensive, try to negotiate a shorter term than what the company is offering.

Steps to take if you were a victim of this scam

- Monitor your financial accounts online for unauthorized activity at least once a day. Do not wait for monthly or quarterly statements.
- Report the incident to the Better Business Bureau and the Federal Trade Commission.
- Notify the issuer of your credit card. They will cancel your current card and issue you a new card with a new account number.
- Report the incident to your local police department.

[Source: FTC]