

CRIME PREVENTION ALERT NOTICE

***72 Telephone Scam**

DO YOU SUBSCRIBE TO OR HAVE CALL FORWARDING? DID YOU USE *72 PREFIX? Please read the following information carefully.

SCAM: TELEPHONE TYPE

HOW: *Members of the public are being tricked by jail inmates and others through a telephone scam.*

CALLER CLAIMS TO BE A DEPUTY SHERIFF, POLICE OFFICER, HOSPITAL, ETC.

WHO: TELEPHONE SCAM IS BEING USED BY JAIL PRISONERS AND OTHERS WHO WANT TO AVOID PAYING FOR COLLECT CALLS

DO NOT DO THIS: CALLER WILL ASK YOU TO CALL AN "OFFICER" OR EQUIVALENT BY DIALING *72 FOLLOWED BY A PHONE NUMBER

RESULTS: THIS ACTIVATES YOUR CALL FORWARDING INCOMING CALLS TO THE SCAMMER WHO USES YOUR NUMBER.

VICTIM'S LOSS: HIGH TELEPHONE CHARGES

DO THIS: HANG UP IMMEDIATELY. CHECK IF YOU HAVE CALL FORWARDING ON YOUR LANDLINE OR WIRELESS SERVICE.

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department is receiving an increasing number of calls from those who have been victims of this telephone scam. At this time, the telephone scammers are jail or prison inmates. Prisoners DO NOT have access to free landline phones. All calls must be made collect and prisoners are using this scam to avoid paying for these calls.

The telephone scam begins when one receives a phone call from a person claiming to be a deputy sheriff, police officer, hospital staff or other "emergency public safety agency." The imposter caller will make up a story (emergency, a member from your family arrested, your loved one or child

hurt in an accident, and so on) to get you interested or concerned enough. The caller will tell you that your phone number was provided by your family member as an emergency contact.

The imposter caller will then give you a name of the emergency contact person and tell you to call that person who is waiting for your call at the accident scene or hospital, etc. The caller will give you a phone number with the *72 prefix followed with a 10-digit phone number (Example: *72-323-555-1212) to reach the contact person.

When you hang up and dial the number provided, the person answering will tell you that you have a wrong number.

Once you dialed the *72 number, you have automatically activated and forwarded all your incoming calls to the scammer's phone number (these include collect calls from inmates who want to avoid paying for collect calls),

The billing for these forwarded calls goes to the victim who called the *72 number UNTIL YOU TURN OFF CALL FORWARDING OR CANCEL SERVICE on their phone (usually by dialing *73).

If you are unsure of the telephone services you have, contact your phone company provider. Not all call forwarding is activated by *72, so ask your provider on how to use it, what other services you have and learn how to use them and to shut off automatic call forwarding.

IF YOU HAVE BEEN A VICTIM OR DIALED A *72 NUMBER CONTACT AND REPORT:

1. Contact your telephone service provider

AT&T 1-800-288-2020 Cox 310-377-1800
Verizon 1-800-837-4966

2. Contact your local law enforcement agency at these non-emergency numbers (all 310 prefixes)

Palos Verdes Estates 378-4211
Rancho Palos Verdes 539-1661 (Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Lomita Station)

3. Contact California Public Utilities Commission's Consumer Hotline at 800-649-7570

Here are additional sources of information:

<ftp://ftp.cpuc.ca.gov/cei/advisories/72%20Scam%20final.pdf>

<http://www.calphoneinfo.com/>

http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/PUC/Telco/Consumer+Information/081022_72advisory.htm