

THE CREDIT UNION COLUMN

HOW TO AVOID A SCAM (Courtesy of the Federal Trade Commission)

FOUR SIGNS THAT IT'S A SCAM

1. Scammers **PRETEND** to be from an organization you know.

Scammers often pretend to be contacting you on behalf of the government. They might use a real name, like the Social Security Administration, the IRS, or Medicare. Some pretend to be from a business you know, like a utility company, a tech company, or even a charity asking for donations. They use technology to change the phone number that appears on your caller ID. So, the name and number you see might not be real.

2. Scammers say there's a **PROBLEM** or a **PRIZE**.

They might say you're in trouble with the government. Or you owe money. Or someone in your family had an emergency. Or that there's a virus on your computer. Some scammers say there's a problem with one of your accounts and that you need to verify some information. Others will lie and say you won money in a lottery or sweepstakes but have to pay a fee to get it.

3. Scammers **PRESSURE** you to act immediately.

Scammers want you to act before you have time to think. If you're on the phone, they might tell you not to hang up so you can't check their story. They might threaten to arrest you, sue you, take away your driver's or business license, or deport you. They might say your computer is about to be corrupted.

4. Scammers tell you to **PAY** in a specific way.

They often insist that you pay by sending money through a money transfer company or by putting money on a gift card and then giving them the number on the back. Some will send you a check (that will later turn out to be fake), tell you to deposit it, and then send them money.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO AVOID A SCAM

1. Block unwanted calls and text messages. Take steps to block unwanted calls and to filter unwanted text messages.
2. Don't give your personal or financial information in response to a request that you didn't expect. Legitimate organizations won't call, email, or text to ask you for your personal information, like Social Security, bank account, or credit card numbers.

If you get an email or text message from a company you do business with and you think it's real, it's still best not to click on any links. Instead, contact them using a website you know is trustworthy. Or look up their phone number. Don't call a number they gave you or the number from your caller ID.

3. Resist the pressure to act immediately. Legitimate businesses will give you time to make a decision. Anyone who pressures you to pay or give them your personal information is a scammer.
4. Know how scammers tell you to pay. Never pay someone who insists you pay with a gift card or by using a money transfer service. And never deposit a check and send money back to someone.
5. Stop and talk to someone you trust. Before you do anything else, tell someone – a friend, a family member, a neighbor, your Credit Union – what happened. Talking about it could help you realize it's a scam.

BE BOULDER

For those who have recently moved to our beautiful town, the visitor entrance hosted by the Chamber of Commerce has a message titled "*Be Kind, Be Boulder.*" As you work to acclimate to our local community, this is a wonderful reminder about what makes our town special. You will find many wonderful attributes about Boulder City that make it a great place to live but what makes the town "go" is the kindness of its people. The willingness of everyone to help our neighbors, support our local businesses, and make a positive difference in the lives of others. Be Kind, Be Boulder.

WORDS OF WISDOM

"To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that prisoner was you."

- Lewis B. Smedes



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ACCOUNTS INSURED UP TO \$500,000



American Share Insurance insures each account up to \$250,000. Excess Share Insurance Corporation provides up to an additional \$250,000 of insurance per account. This institution is not federally insured.