

FRAUD ALERT

August 2024

HANG UP THAT PHONE!

Scam Artists are continually perfecting their scams. They take advantage of the most recent technological innovations while constantly improving methods to manipulate their targets. Despite organizations such as the Better Business Bureau's ongoing development of tools to combat fraud, and identify scammers, the fraudsters continue to stay one step ahead.

They are becoming much better at psychological manipulation of their targets and their game of persuasion. They have upped their proficiency in minimizing their accents and connecting emotionally with their targets. The longer they keep you on the phone, the more likely it is that a recording of your voice will be used to generate a "deep fake" version that can be used to imitate you. This could lead to some very serious concerns, as it can be used to access your insurance company, your bank - anything you can access over the phone with your voice.

One example is the age-old version of the "sweepstakes" scam. It has been recycled so many times you would think that it would no longer be effective. Warning bells should go off immediately if any personal and/or financial information is requested. Furthermore, everyone should take a moment and think "did I even enter a contest or sweepstakes?" It is not a good idea to enter contests or raffles since giving a phone number and an e-mail address is going to lead to an influx of unwanted emails and phone calls and possibly compromise your safety.

Many seniors continue to pay their bills with checks. Due to the uptick in "check cooking" scams it may be a good idea to reconsider your payment method by using a credit card or to make sure that you mail the check from the nearest post office. Additionally, you should monitor your accounts for suspicious activity and report it immediately.

Protect yourself by not answering your phone if you don't recognize the number. If it's important, they'll leave a voicemail. If you do answer the phone, as soon as you realize it's not who you think it is – hang up!

For more information on how to protect yourself from scams and fraud, please visit our website at; www.buckscounty.gov/cp or use the QR code provided.



Monthly Fraud Alerts brought to you by:

Bucks County Crimes Against Older Adults Task Force	
Bucks County District Attorney's Office: 215-348-6344	Senior Law Center: 1-877-727-7529
Bucks County Area Agency on Aging: 267-880-5700	Bucks County Office of Consumer Protection: 215-348-6060
Bucks County Coroner's Office: 215-348-3852	Bucks County Register of Wills: 215-348-6265
Network of Victim Assistance (NOVA): 1-800-675-6900	US Dept. of Health and Human Services/OIG: 1-800-447-8477
www.buckscounty.gov/CrimesAgainstOlderAdults 24 - HOUR HOTLINE: 1-800-490-8505	