

NEWS FROM SCDCA

South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SCDCA WARNS CONSUMERS ABOUT CREDIT CARD SCAM

Columbia, SC... ...Even vigilant consumers may fall prey to this credit card scam. It's smooth. It's savvy. And it's dangerous. Consumers need to beware!

How it works: An individual posing as an employee for the Safety and Fraud Department of a major credit card company calls to tell you they have noticed a suspicious buying pattern on your credit card. When you confirm that you did not purchase the item that they describe, they tell you they have been investigating this particular company and will credit your account for the fraudulent charges. To verify your card is still in your possession, they ask you to give them the 3-digit security number located on the back of your credit card. There are seven numbers on the back of your card; the first four are part of your card number, the next three are the security numbers that verify you are the possessor of the card. These are the numbers you sometimes use to make Internet purchases to prove you have the card. After getting this number, they politely end the conversation by assuring you the problem will be corrected. Before you can realize what has happened, they've made costly purchases on your account.

Why it works: This scam is particularly effective because the caller provides you with all but one piece of information and never asks for your credit card number. During the conversation, the individual will correctly tell you the bank where your card was issued, your mailing address, and even provide you a phone number to call for questions. Prior to calling, the scammer has

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Established by the Consumer Protection code in 1974, The South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs represents the interests of South Carolina Consumers.

Our mission is to protect consumers from inequities in the marketplace through advocacy, mediation, enforcement and education.

For more information, visit www.sccoconsumer.gov.

stolen your credit card number but needs the 3-digit security number to make certain purchases. This is the one piece of information they ask you to supply. The call may seem legitimate, but it is not. Legitimate credit card representatives will NEVER ask for card numbers over the phone.

For more information on frauds and scams, contact the SCDCA Public Information and Education Division at 803.734.4190, toll-free at 1.800.922.1594 or online at www.sconsumer.gov.

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