



NEWS FROM SCDCA

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
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1.800.922.1594 (toll free in SC)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Scam Alert: Medical Alert Device

Columbia, SC...- The South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs (SCDCA) is urging consumers to beware of suspicious calls from fraudsters posing as medical alert systems companies.

This scam preys on the elderly and disabled with an automated call promising a free medical alert system. The message typically says “someone has ordered a free medical alert system for you, and this call is to confirm shipping instructions.” The consumer is instructed to press “1” to speak to a representative for verification purposes. If a button is pressed, the consumer is asked to provide payment information.

Follow the tips below to avoid being victimized by this and other telephone scams:

- **Hang up.** Do not press any buttons and do not speak to a live person.
- **Don’t trust caller ID.** Caller ID is easily “spoofed”. This means someone can use technology to make it appear as if they are calling you from your local area, when they are actually miles away.
- **Never give out personal information.** Don’t give your credit card number, social security number or other personal information to someone you do not know. Remember- government officials, including Medicare, will not call you and ask for this information.
- **Ask for information in writing.** If a button is pressed and a live person comes on, ask them to send you information on the product in writing.
- **Do your research.** If you are in the market for a medical alert system, do your homework before signing on the dotted line. Contact SCDCA to see if any complaints have been filed against the company. Also, ensure you know the initial and any recurring costs, the cancellation policy, and the product features to be sure it suits your needs.

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SCDCA aims to protect consumers from inequities in the marketplace through advocacy, complaint mediation, enforcement and education. To file a complaint or get information on consumer issues, visit www.consumer.sc.gov or call toll-free, 1.800.922.1594.

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