

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The Police Department has received concerns from people who have heard about recent attempts to scam victims out of money. Some of the scams involved the suspects stating the victims' children were in danger, other involve the suspects pretending to be someone with authority or working for a local utility company. This is only a partial list of a multitude of scams being perpetrated.

- A suspect calls and tells the potential victim that their child or grandchild has been arrested or kidnapped. They will release the person if the victim sends them money.
- A suspect calls and tells the potential victim that their child or grandchild has been involved in a car accident. They need money or personal information from the victim to treat the child.
- A suspect calls and tells the victim that they work for Eversource and the victim is past due on payments. The suspect tells the victim to give them their personal information over the phone or the power will be shut off.
- A suspects calls claiming to be from the IRS or other government agency and states that the victim owes the government money or has made errors filling paperwork. The victim is threatened with arrest if they do not pay a fine to the suspect over the phone.
- A suspect claims that a victim has won the lottery and requests a payment up front to cover the taxes on their winnings.
- These callers will attempt to keep the victim on the phone and come up with various reasons why the caller cannot hang up. They do this so that the potential victim cannot call someone to verify the suspect's story or confirm their identity. They are very convincing but if you get these calls you should hang up and contact the police or someone you trust.

Many of these callers request payment in the form of a wire transfer or pre-paid cards loaded with money. Some example of pre-paid calling cards include Green-Dot Cards, Visa Vanilla Cards, and iTunes Cards, but there are many others. Many of the callers have personal information about the victims and their families that is available through the internet and other easily accessible sources. This lends a sense of credibility and legitimacy to the caller.

To protect yourselves from these scams please keep the following in mind:

- Do not provide any personal information to anyone over the phone or email.
- Do not provide any information to any unsolicited callers, emailers or vendors who knock at your door.
- Do not allow anyone into your home claiming to be from a utility company such as Eversource or Yankee Gas unless you have specifically solicited their assistance in advance.
- If you are concerned about a family member, attempt to make contact with them.
- Notify the Stamford Police Department at (203) 977-4444 if you receive any of these calls or any calls that you suspect are not legitimate.
- No government agency will allow you to pay a fine in lieu of being arrested and no legitimate company requests payment in unorthodox forms.

There does not appear to be any danger to your safety from these calls. Most originate outside the United States even when a local number appears on your caller-id.

Sergeant Steven J. Perrotta
Stamford Police Financial Crimes Supervisor