



CHICO POLICE DEPARTMENT

PRESS RELEASE

530-897-4900

Community Alert – Common Phone Scams in Chico

NARRATIVE:

The Chico Police Department is starting to receive an increase of reports from residents that are either a victim of a phone scam or an attempted scam. Recently there have been several police reports of the scams caused significant monetary losses. We are providing our residents with a review of the reported incidents in the hopes that no one becomes a victim.

1. Internal Revenue Service -Warrant for Arrest - residents continue to receive calls from individuals claiming to be from the IRS, that back taxes are owed, and threatens arrest unless payment is made. The callers may have Middle-Eastern accents, yell and threaten the residents. In several cases, the resident's caller ID showed "IRS". A computer device can be purchased to display any phone number or name regardless of the originating call location. The IRS does not call and threaten residents with arrest on back tax cases. This is a scam, hang up phone and report the incident to the police.
2. Microsoft Monitoring Computer Issue or Virus - residents are still receiving calls from individuals identifying themselves as a Microsoft employee that are monitoring a computer issue or virus on a resident's computer. The caller instructs the resident to allow remote access to their computer. Once the caller has access to your computer, they can download your computer hard drive files, passwords, bank account information, or add a virus or keystroke registry that will send the caller a detailed report of your computer activity including websites, user/password information. Microsoft does not monitor anyone's computer; this is a scam. Hang up on caller and report the incident to the police.
3. Fund-Raising for Bogus Charities – residents may receive calls from a person claiming to be raising money for “fallen officers” or other charity. When questioned, the caller creates urgency or ‘hard sell”, demanding payment. If you have a question about the legitimacy of a charity, request written information be mailed to you, including their tax ID number and contact information. Do not give your credit card or bank information over the phone, nor provide any gift card or re-fillable ATM card information. This is a scam, hang up phone and report the incident to the police.

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