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NEWS RELEASE

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MONMOUTH COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE WARNS TO BEWARE OF PHONE SCAMS AND SPOOFING AS CALLS ARE ON THE RISE

Monmouth County: Sheriff Shaun Golden is issuing a warning against solicitation scams by individuals or organizations claiming to be associated with the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office. This comes after the sheriff's office received several calls from residents in reference to a telephone solicitation, claiming that they owed money. The scam artists say they are members of the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office Law Enforcement Division and are calling individuals, stating that their legal issues must be rectified immediately by paying a fine.

“This type of solicitation and misrepresentation is inexcusable and will not be tolerated,” said Sheriff Shaun Golden. “Our agency does not make calls asking for money or contributions of any kind, nor does it authorize the solicitation of funds. We will aggressively investigate such scams and pursue all avenues of complaints both on the criminal and civil side.”

Callers to the sheriff's office complained they were being solicited, lied to and in some cases, harassed.

(con't)

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During several calls, individuals were accused of not reporting to jury duty and were ordered to pay a fine immediately through a pre-paid debit card in order to avoid an arrest warrant.

The calls appear as if they are coming from the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office phone number, since scammers use technology to modify a call from a number when, in actuality, it is not that number. This is called spoofing, where an individual believes the caller is legitimate.

Complaints to the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office can be directed to (732) 431-6400 ext. 1126. If it is determined any laws, rules or directives have been violated, these acts will be reported to the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office, which is authorized to prosecute cases on a county basis, the Division of Consumer Affairs, which is authorized to investigate state offenses, or the Federal Trade Commission, which is the federal agency authorized to investigate consumer offenses nationwide.

In the event you receive a phone call, it's important to adhere to these guidelines:

- You are not being rude you are being shrewd when you simply hang up.
- Beware of offers to "help" and be wary of callers who claim they are law enforcement officers who will help for a fee.
- If you don't want a business to call you again, say so. If they call back report them.
- Put yourself on the federal do not call list. The toll free number is 1-888-382-1222 or www.donotcall.gov.

(con't)

MONMOUTH COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE WARNS TO BEWARE OF PHONE SCAMS AND SPOOFING AS CALLS ARE ON THE RISE

- If you receive a call soliciting funds for the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office please report it to (732) 431-6400 ext. 1126 and provide the date, time, and phone number of the person/organization and details of the call.
- Do not send money through a pre-paid debit card if asked.
- Never give out personal information on the phone.
- Be very cautious if a caller tells you you've won a prize.
- Don't be pressed into quick decisions.
- Take time to discuss an offer with someone you trust.
- Get the offer in writing.
- Be very wary of home repair offers.
- End unwanted calls quickly.
- Safeguard telemarketers from any identifying information which includes social security numbers, credit card numbers, bank account numbers, debit card numbers, etc.
- Check with the Better Business Bureau (609) 588-0808.

“The most important message to be stressed is to hang up. It's not rude it's shrewd,” said Sheriff Golden.

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