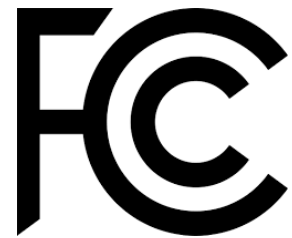




CONSUMER ALERT: PROTECT YOURSELF AGAINST "NEIGHBOR SPOOFING", SCAM CALLERS PLACING PHONE CALLS THAT APPEAR TO BE LOCAL

Caller ID Information Can Be Manipulated to Fool and Defraud Consumers

WASHINGTON, March 8, 2018 - The Federal Communications Commission is warning consumers about "neighbor spoofing" scams where thieves manipulate caller ID information in ways that make calls appear to have been placed locally. While a call might originate overseas, the caller ID information on the recipient's phone would appear as though the call is coming from the consumer's own area code and local exchange. In general, scammers use such spoofing to increase the likelihood that consumers pick up the phone and to increase the consumer's trust in the call.



Consumer Tips:

- Be Aware: Caller ID showing a "local" number no longer means it is necessarily a local caller.
- Don't answer calls from unknown numbers.
- Don't provide any personal information to callers.
- Review call blocking tools provided by your phone company or 3rd party app developers.
- File a complaint with the FCC.
- If the caller claims to be from a legitimate company or organization, hang up and call them back using a valid number found on their website or on your latest bill if you do business with them.
- If you answer and the caller (often a recording) asks you to press a button to stop receiving calls, or asks you to say "yes" in response to a question, just hang up. Scammers often use these tricks to identify, and then target, live respondents, or to use your "yes" to apply unauthorized charges to your bill.
- If you answer and the caller asks for payment using a gift card, it's likely a scam. Legitimate organizations like law enforcement will not ask for payment with a gift card.
- If you have lost money as a result of a scam call, contact your local law enforcement agency for assistance.
- Consider registering all of your telephone numbers in the National Do Not Call Registry. Lawful telemarketers use this list to avoid calling consumers on the list.

Everyone who believes they have been targeted by a robocall scam may file a complaint with the FCC Consumer Complaint Center, the FTC Complaint Assistant or the Better Business Bureau's Scam Tracker. The FCC reviews consumer complaints and may utilize them in enforcement actions and to inform its policy-making work.

FCC Chairman Ajit Pai also outlines tips for consumers in this recent video:
<https://www.youtube.com/embed/j8m-NDEWiBQ?rel=0>