EUGENE POLICE NEWS RELEASE

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Strange Prize Scam – Victim was called by “Police” from a “spoofed’ number

What is spoofing and why you shouldn’t provide money or credit cards when you are told you’ve ‘won’ something
Case Number 15-04966

Earlier this week, a potential victim of a strange ‘prize scam’ did the right thing and independently verified information when she received a phone call telling her she won a prize.

The bottom line in the “Prize Scam” is that if you have to pay money to win a prize or sweepstakes, it’s not a prize. And, that scammers can use your caller ID system and ‘spoof’ the caller number to make you think it is coming from someone legitimate, when it is really the scammer. Here’s how yesterday’s prize scam attempt went down:

First a female victim received a call from “Agent Mike Stone from the Publisher’s Clearing House” at about 12:30 on March 23. This person told her she had been selected to receive $600,000 and the prize was still unclaimed. Rightfully so, she was immediately suspicious. But, the agent told her he would validate her prize with local law enforcement. She was later called from a number identified as “541-682-5111, with City of Eugene as a subject line. The person on the line was claiming he was “Lieutenant Doug Mozan, of the Eugene Police Department.” This was actually a scammer posing as Lt. Mozan and using spoofing to have Eugene Police’s non-emergency phone number show up on caller i.d. The scammer, posing as Lt. Mozan, told the woman she was spot-on in her suspicion, and then he recommended she not send any money to “Agent Stone” until he could verify the information provided. The scammer still posing as Lt. Mozan called her back the following day to let her know her prize had been “verified” with Washington, D.C., and a bank in Mexico that the claim was legitimate.

While many people would have been taken in by this, this wise woman decided to independently verify all this by finding Eugene Police’s phone number and calling Lt. Doug Mozan herself. She did this and discovered the scammer had been trying to dupe her all along. Thankfully, she sent no money out.

There’s a good event coming up to help people learn all about scams:

Scam Jam
It’s free, April 27 from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Hult Center; http://scamjamoregon.com/event/scam-jam-eugene/

Tips to prevent falling for this scam:

- Don’t provide money or credit card information to collect a prize

- Fraudulent scam artists often request this information and then go on a spending spree with your credit card; or wipe out your bank account. Sometimes they ask for money to cover taxes or other fees prior to you receiving the prize. This is not legitimate.

- Be wary of caller ID ‘spoofing’

- Always independently verify everything.

**Caller ID and Spoofing (From FCC information)**

Caller Identification, or "Caller ID," allows you to identify a caller before you answer your telephone. A caller’s number and/or name are displayed - on your phone or an external display unit. Some phone and cable companies offer widgets that allow you to see caller ID displayed on your TV or computer screen.

Caller ID service, however, is susceptible to fraud. Using a practice known as "caller ID spoofing," callers can deliberately falsify the telephone number and/or name relayed as the Caller ID information to disguise the identity of the calling party.

**Some good sites for further information:**
http://info.pch.com/consumer-information/tips-a-warning-signs

http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0199-prize-scams

http://blog.aarp.org/2015/02/20/10-ways-to-win-in-sweepstakes-scams/?sf36547766=1

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