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Rockland County TRIAD Program

Reducing Crimes Against Seniors

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CALLER ID

Is Caller ID a convenient service for the consumers who like to screen their incoming phone calls, or, has it become an avenue for the scam artist to rip you off? A new scam is called "Spoofing".

Technology now exists that enables callers to manipulate the phone number and even the name that shows up on the unsuspecting recipient's Caller ID display, allowing them to masquerade as officials of legitimate companies, churches, banks, credit card companies and courthouses.

Spoofing doesn't require any substantial investment, and there are a number of firms that specialize in selling the service. One such firm, with its motto "*Be who you want to be*," SpoofCard.com, sells calling cards for as little as \$10 for 60 minutes of talk time.

This is how it works: SpoofCard has a dedicated toll-free number where a user enters a PIN, the desired fake caller identity and the number they'd like to call.

SpoofCard users also have the ability to select a male or female voice. The caller speaks normally, but the person on the other end hears the altered male or female voice selected by the caller.

Companies selling Spoofing services claim its markets include legitimate users such as private investigators, law enforcement officials and lawyers. For example, if a law enforcement officer is attempting to find a suspect and has reason to believe that person is at a particular residence, the investigator probably wouldn't want to place a call with telltale police department information showing up on the caller ID.

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Another example could be a situation where the caller makes a call from their personal cell phone and doesn't want the recipient to have the cell phone number; the caller could use spoofing technology to display their office number instead.

But there is a dark side to spoofing that's emerging at a high rate of speed. Scam artists are using this service, persuading consumers to reveal their Social Security numbers or other sensitive personal information.



For example - You receive an incoming call and your Caller ID display indicates the call is coming from your local courthouse. The caller tells you that you have failed to show up for jury duty and requests you pay a fine or provide your SSN or other personal data so the court may reschedule you for jury duty.

If you are contacted by a person claiming to be from a jury office, with your caller ID showing a courthouse number, requesting that you pay a fine or provide personal information because you missed jury duty, **do not give that person any information.**

**Bottom line.....DO NOT AUTOMATICALLY ASSUME
THE INFORMATION DISPLAYED IN YOUR CALLER ID
ACCURATELY IDENTIFIES THE CALLER.**

Stay Alert

In June, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bipartisan measure that would make it a crime to transmit misleading caller ID information with the intent to defraud or harm.