



FRAUD ALERT!

From the Office of Lee County Sheriff Mike Scott

Beware Fake Debt Collection Agencies

Scammers are using people's fear of being labeled "deadbeats" to extort money from honest, creditworthy consumers.

Posing as a collection agency, the con artist contacts a victim, claiming the person owes a specific amount to a particular company.

To convince victims to wire money to pay the "delinquent accounts," scammers threaten to report "overdue bills" to credit bureaus, take some form of legal action or even drain money from victims' bank accounts.

Ironically, real "deadbeats" probably wouldn't fall for this scam, since they have no intention of repaying their creditors. But upright citizens may doubt themselves, thinking they've forgotten to pay a bill.

And, because the sums involved tend to be fairly small, some people may be tempted to just pay the "bill" and "get it over with."

Do NOT "pay off" these scammers!

Instead, contact the actual creditor to learn if someone opened an account in your name. This is important because you could be a victim of identity theft -- and not know it.

To receive a FREE copy of your credit report each year and to ensure there is no inaccurate information or unusual activity, contact the following. *It is safe to give your Social Security Number.*

Website: www.annualcreditreport.com

Telephone: 877-322-8228

To learn more about how to protect yourself from these unscrupulous people visit our website at www.sheriffleefl.org and following the Crime Prevention links or call our Community Relations line at 239-477-1477.



For assistance call the Lee County Sheriff's Office Fraud Line: 239-477-1242

CASE is a Partnership of the Lee County Sheriff's Office and the community to prevent elder financial exploitation