



NEWS RELEASE

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Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division Warns of Sweepstakes Imposters

PIERRE, S.D. – Attorney General Marty Jackley is warning South Dakota consumers that winners of the Publishers Clearing House Sweepstakes do not receive phone calls about their prizes. The Publishers Clearing House organization will be releasing prize winners in the near future and consumers are beginning to receive imposter calls attempting to scam them out of their money.

“South Dakotans receiving phone calls from anyone claiming to be Publishers Clearing House should hang up immediately. Do not be tempted to respond to the appeal of the call based on the false hope of being declared a winner, said Jackley. “Legitimate winners of any kind of sweepstakes are never required to pay monies to receive a prize.”

The Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division has received numerous phone calls from consumers indicating the scammers have stated that the consumer has won a new car, a vacation, a cash prize, or all of the above. However, in order to receive their prize, consumers are first asked for some type of payment. The most common requests are money wire transfers or the purchase of pre-paid debit cards.

Consumer tips to avoid becoming a victim:

- Be aware that callers can “spoof” the caller ID to make it appear legitimate. This allows the scammer to trick the Caller ID display and make any number of their choosing appear on the screen – often appears as a local call.
- If you do answer, get off the phone immediately. These scammers are very good at what they do. The longer you listen, the more likely you will fall victim.
- If you are asked to send money for any reason to claim a prize, it is a scam.
- If you fall victim and send money, your name and information will likely be added to a list and sold to other scammers. Your scam calls may increase as well as your junk mail.

If you feel you have been a victim of this scam or need any additional information, contact the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division at 800-300-1986 or consumerhelp@state.sd.us.

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