

LOCUST POLICE DEPARTMENT

CRIME PREVENTION TIPS

Reporting Crime

Eyewitness information is the key to solving many crimes. The following tips will assist you when reporting crime. Call immediately. A five-minute delay can reduce the chance of catching criminals.

Tell the Communications Center as much as you can. No fact is too trivial as they will be relaying the information to the Locust Police as we are en route to the area. In many cases, what victims and witnesses tell the police about the criminal that results in an arrest. You may be asked the following when reporting a crime:

- Who, What, When, and Where?
- How many suspects were there?
- Can you describe the suspect(s)?
- Can you describe their vehicle(s)?
- What was/were the license plate number(s)?
- What did they do?
- What did they say?
- What did they take?
- Which way did they go?

Due to limited personnel, the Locust Police Department may not be able to respond immediately. Don't be discouraged. They will get to you as soon as possible. Do not attempt to stop or detain the suspect(s) yourself.

What is Suspicious?

Anything that seems even slightly "out of place" or is occurring at an unusual time of day or night could be criminal activity. The following are some obvious things to watch for:

- A stranger entering your neighbor's house when it is unoccupied;
- A scream heard anywhere might mean robbery or assault;
- Offers of merchandise at ridiculously low prices may mean stolen property;
- Anyone removing accessories, license plates, or gas from a vehicle should be reported;

- Anyone peering into parked vehicles may be looking for a vehicle to steal or for valuables left in the vehicle;
- Persons entering or leaving a place of business after hours;
- A sound of breaking glass or loud explosive noises could mean an accident, burglary or vandalism;
- Persons loitering around schools, parks and secluded areas could be sex offenders;
- Persons loitering in the neighborhood who do not live there; and
- Anyone forcing entry to, or tampering with a residence, business, or vehicle should be reported.

Things to Watch Out For That Are Not So Obvious:

- **Strangers and solicitors.**

Verify the employment of all solicitors, meter readers and repair personnel prior to allowing them entry into your home. This can be done by obtaining the employer's number from the telephone book or by contacting directory assistance. Never take a telephone number offered by a suspicious person. Be suspicious of alleged delivery personnel with a wrong address or asking if someone lives there.

- **Someone carrying property.**

If it's at an unusual hour, unusual place, or if the property is not wrapped as if just purchased.

- **Someone going door-to-door in your neighborhood.**

Watch for awhile. If after a few houses are visited, one or more persons tries a door to see if it is locked, looks into windows, or goes into a back or side yard, it could be a burglar. Call the Locust Police Department immediately; don't wait for the person to leave.

- **Traffic to and from a certain residence.**

It is not suspicious unless it occurs on a daily basis or very regular basis, especially during late or unusual hours.

- **Any vehicle moving slowly and without lights, or following a course that appears aimless or repetitive in any location.**

Particularly in areas of schools, parks and playgrounds. Occupants may be looking for places to rob or burglarize, or they could be drug pushers or sex offenders.

- **Parked vehicles containing one or more persons.**

If it is an unusual hour they could be lookouts for a burglary in progress.

- **An abandoned vehicle parked on your block.**

May be a stolen vehicle.

- **Continuous repair operations at non-business locations.**

It could mean stolen property is being stripped, repainted, or otherwise altered.

- **Persons making a quick change of vehicles.**

May be attempting to elude the police or abandoning a stolen vehicle.

- **One or more juveniles walking through the neighborhood looking into automobiles or backyards.**
- **Any person taking a shortcut through a backyard.**

Once You Have Reported The Crime, Stick With It

It pays to prosecute. Many criminals who are arrested for property crimes are convicted.

Being a witness in court is not as much trouble as you think, and usually you may be placed on telephone stand-by in case of a trial where your testimony may be needed.

CRIMES WE HAVE SEEN IN LOCUST

- Although you should use the same precautions and safety strategies that you would use in any city large or small, below are some offenses that we have come across on a regular basis in the Locust area, followed by crime prevention and safety suggestions:
 - **UNLOCKED VEHICLE BREAK-INS** – Thieves going house to house in entire neighborhoods and simply checking door handles for unlocked vehicles. If the vehicles are unlocked, they take whatever they can find that may have value. **PREVENTION** – Take ALL items you consider valuable out of vehicle or at the very least put them in the trunk. Make sure keys are not left in vehicle and vehicle is locked.
 - **PROPERTY STOLEN FROM YARDS AND RESIDENCES** – These items can range from expensive valuables or firearms all the way down to some scrap metal in the backyard or that old weed eater you've been meaning to get repaired. **PREVENTION** – Make sure any items you do not want stolen are secured somewhere that they cannot be easily removed. In the case that your residence is broken into, safes should be considered for expensive valuables or family heirlooms. Serial numbers should be recorded for any valuable items that contain them and kept in a secure location. These numbers can be tracked if a thief attempts to sell or pawn the stolen item.

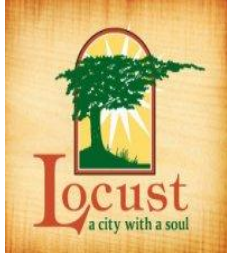
- **DOOR TO DOOR SOLICITORS (SALESMEN)** – Salesmen going door to door in neighborhoods selling products and services. These salesmen may be legit or could be scam artists.
PREVENTION – Any door to door solicitor inside the city limits of Locust must have obtained a sales or business license to solicit door to door. Do not let the salesman inside until you have seen this VALID license. At any time you feel uncomfortable and the salesman will not leave, contact the Locust Police Department at (704)986-3700 or 911, depending on the severity of the situation.

- **TELEPHONE SCAMS** – These acts usually involve someone on phone attempting to convince you that you have won something, or can help you out with some type of debt or expense among many other types of scams. They will attempt to get you to send money somewhere or to give out personal/financial information. We have also seen the “grandparent’s scam” where someone calls a senior citizen, attempting to convince them that they are their grandchild and they are in trouble. They will then attempt to get them to send money. **PREVENTION** – See below information and tips for prevention, but be extremely wary of giving personal information over the phone. Contact the Locust Police Department if you are unsure of potential scams.

- **IDENTITY THEFT** – Usually as a result of a person’s financial information being stolen, or even their wallet containing their credit cards and identification. **PREVENTION** – Same prevention as above, be very careful about who you give personal information to and always make sure your credit cards and other identification are in a safe secure place.

- **WAL-MART RETAIL THEFT** – Persons concealing items and stealing them from the business. Items from the electronics section are the most popular items to steal and often times involve the offender removing them from packaging to prevent the anti-theft device from activating when leaving the business. **PREVENTION** – If you notice any one person or persons in the electronic section acting suspiciously; removing items from packages, putting items inside clothing, suspiciously “looking out” for where employees are or having an associated subject as a “look out”, walking with an item toward the bathroom.....notify a Wal-Mart employee or Wal-Mart loss prevention.

- **INTOXICATED/IMPAIRED DRIVERS** – Drivers who are driving recklessly, dangerously, or erratically due to being under the influence. **PREVENTION** – If you observe vehicles that are swerving heavily, having trouble staying on the road or in their lane, or are just being driven in a “weird” or suspicious fashion.....stay at a safe distance and contact the Locust Police Department by dialing 911 or (704)986-3700. It will benefit us if you can remain safely behind the vehicle to advise dispatch of where the vehicle is heading until we can locate the vehicle, however do not put yourself in danger in order to do so.



CONTACT NUMBERS FOR EMERGENCIES OR OTHER SITUATIONS

Stanly County Communications Non-Emergency Dispatch – (704)986-3700

Stanly County Communications Emergency Dispatch – 911

Cabarrus County Communications Non-Emergency Dispatch – (704)920-3000 (Meadowcreek Village, Red Bridge Blvd.)(Request any other Cabarrus County agencies through this number)

Locust Police Department – (Mon. – Fri. 8 am – 5 pm) (704)888-4744

Locust Police Department (Information Request E-Mail) – jbslpd@gmail.com

Locust Police Department (Website) - <http://www.locustnc.com/pd.html>

Stanly County Animal Control – (704)986-3881

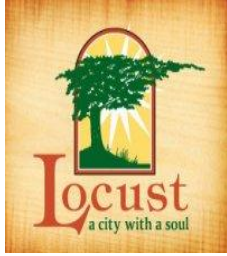
Stanly County Social Services – (704)982-6100

Stanly County Domestic Violence – (Emergency) (704)961-7500, (Non-Emergency) (704)961-7502

Stanly County Magistrate’s Office – (704)986-7019

Stanly County Clerk Of Courts – (704)986-7000

Stanly County Sheriff’s Office – (704)986-3714 (If you need Sheriff’s Dept. immediate assistance, contact Stanly County Communications emergency or non-emergency number)



Tips on How to Identify a Scam or Fraud

If the email, phone call, prize or lottery notification has any of the following elements, we strongly suggest it is probably a fraud and you do not respond to it. Below are some general tips to recognize scams. Detailed information can be found from the menu buttons at left:

- The name of the company is listed on this website somewhere as a scam.
- The email matches one of the definitions or formats on this website.
- The organization has no website and can not be located in [Google](#).
- The email or requestor asks for bank account information, credit card numbers, driver's license numbers, passport numbers, your mother's maiden name or other personal information.
- The email or caller advises that you have won a prize - but you did not enter any competition run by the prize promoters.
- The email claims you won a lottery (we know of NO legal lottery that notifies winners by email)
- The mail may be personally addressed to you but it has been posted using bulk mail - thousands of others around the world may have received the exact same notification. Especially true if you find an exact or similar email posted on this website.
- The return address is a yahoo, hotmail, excite.com or other free email accounts. Legitimate companies can afford the roughly \$100 per year that it costs to acquire and maintain a domain and related company email account.
- The literature contains a lot of hype and exaggerations, but few specific details about costs, your obligations, how it works, etc.
- The prize promoters ask for a fee (for administration, "processing", taxes, etc.) to be paid in advance. A legitimate lottery simply deducts that from the winnings!
- The scheme offers bait prizes that, if they are real, are often substandard, over-priced, or falsely represented. Or, as part of the prize you can purchase "exclusive items" which may also be over-priced or substandard.
- To get your prize might require travel overseas at your own cost (and personal risk) to receive it.

<http://www.consumerfraudreporting.org/identify.php>

Putting Telephone Scams on Hold

Recognize & Report Phone Fraud

Telemarketing fraud is a multi-billion dollar business in the United States. Every year, thousands of consumers lose as little as a few dollars to as much as their life savings to telephone con artists.

That's why the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) encourages you to be skeptical when you hear a phone solicitation and to be aware of the Telemarketing Sales Rule, a law that can help you protect yourself from abusive and deceptive telemarketers.

Unlike most other crimes, telemarketing fraud requires one essential element: victim participation. We're all potential targets, because fraud isn't limited by race, ethnic background, gender, age, education, or income. But, if you're age 60 or older, you may be a special target for people who sell bogus products and services by phone. The best way to protect yourself is to know the differences between legitimate offers and fraudulent ones.

How Telemarketers Contact You

- **Cold Calls.** Operators may get your number from a telephone directory, a mailing list, or what fraudsters call a "sucker list." Sucker lists contain information about people who have responded to previous telemarketing solicitations, like their name, phone number, and how much money they spent. The lists are bought and sold by promoters. They are invaluable to scam artists, who believe that consumers who have been deceived once are vulnerable to additional scams.
- **Direct Mail.** You may get a letter or postcard saying you've won a prize or a contest. This often is a front for a scam. The instructions tell you to respond to the promoter with certain information. If you do, you'll be called by someone who may use persuasive sales pitches, scare tactics, and false claims to deceive you and take your money.
- **Broadcast and Print Advertisements.** You may place a call in response to a television, newspaper, or magazine advertisement. The fact that you initiate the call doesn't mean the business is legitimate or that you should be less cautious about buying or investing on the phone.

How Older People Become Victims of Telemarketing Fraud

Fraudulent telemarketers try to take advantage of older people on the theory that they may be more trusting and polite toward strangers. Older women living alone are special targets of these scam artists.

Here are some reasons older people become victims of telemarketing fraud:

- Often it's hard to know whether a sales call is legitimate. Telephone con artists are skilled at sounding believable — even when they're really telling lies.
- Sometimes telephone con artists reach you when you're feeling lonely. They may call day after day — until you think a friend, not a stranger, is trying to sell you something.

- Some telephone salespeople have an answer for everything. You may find it hard to get them off the phone — even if they’re selling something you’re not interested in — because you don’t want to be rude.
- You may be promised free gifts, prizes, or vacations — or the “investment of a lifetime” — but only if you act “right away.” It may sound like a really good deal. In fact, telephone con artists are only after your money. Don’t give it to them.

The Hooks

Prize Offers. You usually have to do something to get your “free” prize, like attend a sales presentation, buy something, pay a fee, or give out a credit card number. But the prizes are worthless or overpriced.

- Travel Packages. “Free” or “low cost” vacations can end up costing a bundle in hidden costs. You may pay a high price for some part of the package — like hotel or airfare. The total cost may run two to three times more than what you’d expect to pay, or what you were led to believe. Some “bargain” vacations may never happen at all.
- Investments. People lose millions of dollars each year to “get rich quick” schemes that promise high returns with little or no risk. These can include movies or cable television production deals, Internet gambling, rare coins, art, or other “investment opportunities.” The schemes vary, but one thing is consistent: Unscrupulous promoters of investment fraud rely on the fact that investing may be complicated, and many people don’t research the investment process.
- Charities. Con artists often push you for an immediate gift, but won’t send written information so you can check them out. They also may try to confuse you by using names that sound like well-known charitable organizations or even law enforcement agencies.
- Reloading Scams. If you buy into any of the above scams, you’re likely to be called again by someone promising to get your money back. Be careful not to lose more money to this common practice. Even law enforcement officials can’t guarantee they’ll recover your money.
- Foreign Lotteries. Scam operators — often based in Canada — are using the telephone and direct mail to entice U.S. consumers to buy chances in high-stakes foreign lotteries from as far away as Australia and Europe. These lottery solicitations violate U.S. law, which prohibits the cross-border sale or purchase of lottery tickets by phone or mail. And you may never see a ticket.
- Medical Discounts. If you’re considering signing up for a medical discount plan, be aware of scam artists who are reportedly contacting seniors claiming to represent providers. All they really want is your personal information so they can commit financial fraud.
- “Expiring” car warranties. Scammers find out what kind of car you drive, and when you bought it, so they can pitch overpriced — or worthless — extended car warranties.

Tip-Offs to Rip-Offs

If you hear these — or similar — "lines" from a telephone salesperson, just say "no thank you," and hang up the phone.

"You've been specially selected to hear this offer."

"You'll get a wonderful free bonus if you buy our product."

"You've won one of five valuable prizes."

"You've won big money in a foreign lottery."

"You must send money right away."

"This investment is low risk and provides a higher return than you can get anywhere else."

"You have to make up your mind right away."

"You don't need to check our company with anyone"- including your family, lawyer, accountant, local Better Business Bureau, or consumer protection agency.

"We'll just put the shipping and handling charges on your credit card."

"You don't need any written information about our company or references."

How Can You Protect Yourself?

- Don't be pressured to make an immediate decision.
- Don't give your credit card, checking account, or Social Security number to unknown callers.
- Don't pay for something merely because you'll get a "free gift."
- Get all information in writing before you agree to buy.
- Check out a charity before you give. Ask how much of your donation actually goes to the charity. Ask that written information be sent to you so you can make an informed giving decision.
- Don't invest your money with an unknown caller who insists you make up your mind immediately.

- If the offer is an investment, check with your state securities regulator to see if it's properly registered.
- Don't send cash by messenger or overnight mail. If you use cash rather than a credit card in the transaction, you may lose your right to dispute fraudulent charges.
- Make sure you know the per minute charge for any 900-number call you make.
- Don't agree to any offer where you have to pay a "registration" or "shipping fee" to receive a prize or a gift. If you have to pay, it's a purchase — not a prize or a gift.
- Don't confirm your account information over the phone or by email. Some callers have your billing information before they call you. They're trying to get you to say "okay" so they can claim you approved a charge.
- Check out unsolicited offers with the Better Business Bureau, local consumer protection agency, or state Attorney General's office before you agree to send money.
- Beware of offers to "help" you recover money you may have lost previously. Be wary of callers saying they are law enforcement officers who will help you get your money back "for a fee."
- Don't be afraid to say "no thanks" and hang up the phone
- If you don't want a business to call you again, say so. If they call back, they're breaking the law.

The National Do Not Call Registry

You can limit the number of telemarketing calls you receive by placing your phone number on the National Do Not Call Registry.

You can register your phone number at www.DoNotCall.gov, or by calling 1-888-382-1222 (TTY: 1-866-290-4236) from the number you wish to register. If you register online, you must click on the confirmation email you receive to complete your free registration.

Your registration will not expire. Your number is on the list until you take it off, or your number is disconnected and re-assigned to someone else.

Placing your number on the Registry stops most telemarketing calls, but not all. Once your number has been on the Registry for 31 days, you still may get calls from, or on behalf of: political organizations, charities, and pollsters; companies with whom you have an existing business relationship; and companies to whom you've given permission to call.

Companies that you do business with may call for 18 months. If you ask a company for information, it may call for three months.

The Telemarketing Sales Rule

The FTC's Telemarketing Sales Rule requires certain disclosures and prohibits misrepresentations. It gives you the power to stop unwanted telemarketing calls and gives state law enforcement officers the authority to prosecute fraudulent telemarketers who operate across state lines.

The Rule covers most types of telemarketing calls to consumers, including calls to pitch goods, services, "sweepstakes" and prize promotion or investment opportunities. It also applies to calls consumers make in response to materials received in the mail or offers made through the Internet.

Keep this information near your telephone. It can help you determine if you're talking with a legitimate telemarketer or a scam artist.

- It's illegal for a telemarketer to call you if you've asked not to be called. In fact, the federal government has created the National Do Not Call Registry — the free, easy way to reduce the telemarketing calls you get at home.
- If your number is not on the National Do Not Call Registry, you still can ask a company to put you on its own do not call list. The company must honor your request.
- Calling times are restricted to the hours between 8 a.m. and 9 p.m. A seller calling earlier or later is breaking the law.
- Telemarketers must tell you it's a sales call and who's doing the selling before they make their pitch. If it's a prize promotion, they must tell you that no purchase or payment is necessary to enter or win. If you're asked to pay for a prize or a gift, hang up. Free is free.
- It's illegal for telemarketers to misrepresent any information, including facts about their goods or services, the earnings potential, profitability, or risk of an investment, or the nature of a prize in a prize-promotion scheme.
- Telemarketers must tell you the total cost of the products or services offered and any restrictions on getting or using them, or that a sale is final or non-refundable, before you pay. In a prize promotion, they must tell you the odds of winning, that no purchase or payment is necessary to win, and any restrictions or conditions of receiving the prize.
- It's illegal for a telemarketer to withdraw money from your checking account without your express, verifiable authorization. That means they must tell you the total number of payments, the amount of each payment, the date the payments will be submitted to your bank, and which account they will charge.
- Telemarketers cannot lie to get you to pay, no matter what method of payment you use.
- You don't have to pay for credit repair, recovery, or advance-fee loan/credit services until after these services have been delivered. (Most of these offers are scams. Credit repair companies claim that, for a fee, they can change or erase accurate negative information from your credit report. Only time can erase such information. "Reloaders" contact people who have lost money to a previous telemarketing scam and promise that, for a fee or donation to a specified charity, they will recover your lost money, or the product or prize never received from a telemarketer. Advance-fee loans are offered by companies who claim they can guarantee you a loan for a fee paid in advance. The fee may range from \$100 to several hundred dollars.)

Exceptions to the Rule

Although most types of telemarketing calls are covered by the Rule, there are several exceptions. The Rule does not cover the following situations:

- Calls placed by consumers in response to general media advertising, like television or newspaper advertisements. (Calls responding to ads for investment opportunities, credit repair services, recovery room services, or advance-fee loans are covered).
- Calls placed by consumers in response to direct mail advertising that discloses all the material information required by the Rule, except calls responding to ads for investment opportunities, business opportunities other than those covered by the Franchise Rule, credit card loss protection, prize promotions, credit repair services, recovery room services, advance-fee loans, or to “upselling.” Upselling is when a company offers you additional goods or services after the initial transaction for which you called.
- Catalog sales.
- Calls that are initiated by the consumer that are not made in response to any solicitation.
- Sales that are not completed, and payment or authorization for payment is not required, until there is a face-to-face sales presentation.
- Business-to-business calls. But calls offering nondurable office or cleaning supplies are covered.
- Sales of pay-per-call services and sales of franchises. These are covered by other FTC rules.

<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/telemarketing/tel12.shtm>

Report Violations of the National Do Not Call Registry

If your number is on the National Do Not Call Registry, you should get calls only from those companies with which you do business — or those that have your permission to call. If you get calls from a company you don't have a relationship with — or from a company you have told not to call you — report it. Jot down the name and number of the caller, and the date and time of the call. To report violations of the National Do Not Call Registry, visit www.DoNotCall.gov or call toll-free 1-888-382-1222 (TTY: 1-866-290-4236).

Report a Scam

Fight telephone fraud. Report telephone scam artists to the Federal Trade Commission and your state Attorney General. The Telemarketing Sales Rule gives these local law enforcement officers the power to prosecute fraudulent telemarketers who operate across state lines.

To learn more about how to recognize and report phone fraud, go to www.ftc.gov/phonefraud.

The FTC works to prevent fraudulent, deceptive and unfair business practices in the marketplace and to provide information to help consumers spot, stop and avoid them. To file a [complaint](#) or get [free information on consumer issues](#), visit ftc.gov or call toll-free, 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357); TTY: 1-866-653-4261. Watch a video, [How to File a Complaint](#), at ftc.gov/video to learn more. The FTC enters consumer complaints into the [Consumer Sentinel Network](#), a secure online database and investigative tool used by hundreds of civil and criminal law enforcement agencies in the U.S. and abroad.

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'Grandparent' scam targets senior citizens

By: Brittany Edney

HAVELOCK—A national scam targeting senior citizens has made its way to the coast.

Officials say the **Grandparent Scam** is when a grandparent receives a phone call from someone they believe to be their grandchild. The person says they are traveling abroad when some type of accident occurs causing them to need money.

That is exactly what happened to Havelock resident Willis Peaden.

"My grandson Joshua Bishop is who I thought I was talking to. It sounded just like him," said Peaden.

However it was not Joshua. It was a scam artist who convinced Peaden to wire \$4,200 to Peru. Peaden discovered the con when he called family members.

"I said, did Josh get home?" said Willis. Family members then informed him that Josh has been at home the whole time.

Peaden reported the incident to local authorities but they are unable to help because the money was sent overseas.

Adam Levin, Chairman of Credit.com said your identity is an asset and needs protecting.

"Never do anything that someone you haven't heard from or talked to in a long time, asks you to do unless you can absolutely confirm that they are who they say they are," said Levin.

Levin offered some ideas on how to protect your identity:

- Limit the amount of information you share on social media sites
- Don't carry your social security card or too many credit cards
- Never share sensitive information over the phone.

As for the future, Peaden said he won't be fooled twice.

"We're going to get together as a family and come up with a code. Anytime you need help, you're going to have to give me the code," said Peaden.

Anyone who receives a suspicious phone call is urged to contact the [Attorney General's office](#).

http://triangle.news14.com/content/local_news/coastal/649196/-grandparent--scam-targets-senior-citizens

- SEE ADDITIONAL ATTACHMENTS FOR A HOME SAFETY CHECKLIST AND A SAFER HOME BROCHURE.
<http://www.elkgrovepd.org/prevention/crime-prevention.asp>
- IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS THAT HAVE NOT BEEN ANSWERED IN THIS PACKET OR WOULD LIKE TO REQUEST INFORMATION ON A SPECIFIC TOPIC, YOU MAY EMAIL YOUR REQUEST TO OFFICER SHEW AT jbslpd@gmail.com OR YOU MAY CONTACT THE LOCUST POLICE DEPARTMENT AT (704)888-4744.

THE LOCUST POLICE DEPARTMENT ASKS ALL CITIZENS TO HELP US PREVENT AND SOLVE CRIME IN OUR GREAT CITY. TOGETHER, WE CAN KEEP LOCUST SAFE TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE