



# HALL COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

## CRIME PREVENTION UNIT



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## SCAM ALERT

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**DATE:** September 14, 2009  
**TO:** Crime Prevention Program Participants  
**FROM:** Deputy Stephen Wilbanks  
**SUBJECT:** DEBIT / CREDIT CARD SCAM ALERT

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On Friday, September 11<sup>th</sup>, the Sheriff's Office received an email from a diligent citizen regarding another identity theft / financial scam. Here's the rundown on this one:

The potential victim received an automated telephone call stating that her debit card had been deactivated, and in order to reactivate it she would be required to enter her Social Security Number over the telephone touchpad. Being a fraud victim in the past, she immediately recognized that this was not standard procedure in the banking industry and terminated the call. She then called her financial institution, who confirmed that the call did not come from them and there was nothing wrong with her debit card or account. She also recorded the number from which the call was initiated, which dialed back to a law firm in the Boston area. I spoke with personnel at that firm, and they confirmed that this is a scam in which their telephone number has been electronically hijacked for this purpose, and that it is targeting residents in Georgia and other states.

### LESSONS LEARNED:

- 1) Never give personal or financial information over the telephone, **unless it is a call that you initiate to a known, legitimate source**, regardless of how official the call might sound.
- 2) If you receive such a call, immediately contact your financial institution to verify the integrity of your account.
- 3) It's okay to be a little suspicious of any type of telephone solicitation. Criminals invent new and creative ways everyday to separate decent people from their hard-earned money. If in doubt, simply end the call and do a little research to verify what you're being told.
- 4) If you learn that your account has been breached or your identity stolen, take immediate action to prevent any further fraudulent activity.
  - a. Check your credit report for any other suspicious looking financial activity.
  - b. File a police report documenting the fraud.
  - c. Contact all creditors with whom the fraud occurred to dispute the activity.
  - d. Consider initiating a fraud alert on your credit to prevent any future damage.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact

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