



Many legitimate companies and charities solicit consumers by phone. Unfortunately, con artists use the phone, too. They rob people every day, with phones as their weapons. The following tips can help protect you from abusive or deceptive telemarketers.

- **Beware of anyone who asks you to send money or buy something sight unseen, unless you are certain you are dealing with a reputable firm.** You can check out the company by calling the South Dakota Division of Consumer Protection or other consumer protection agencies.
- **Resist high pressure sales tactics.** Legitimate businesses respect the fact that you are not interested or that you want to research the company before buying.
- **Keep information about your bank accounts or credit card information to yourself.** Give this information only to those businesses with whom you are familiar, never to those who solicit you first.
- **Do not pay for a free prize. Free is free.** If a caller tells you that there is a fee of any type, such as taxes or shipping and handling costs, he or she is breaking the law.
- **Never send cash, check or money orders by courier, overnight delivery or wire to anyone who insists on immediate payment.** This type of request is a clear sign of fraudulent activity. Paying by credit card is safest because you can dispute the charges if you do not get what you were promised.



- **Do not let appeals designed to tug at your emotions influence your decision.** Some telemarketers will request you send money to charitable causes such as law enforcement agencies, firefighters, children's projects or community causes which do not exist.
- **Beware of identity thieves.** Crooks pretending to be from companies you do business with may call or send an email, asking to verify personal information they should already have. Contact the company directly to confirm before providing any information.
- **It's illegal for a telemarketer to call you if you have asked not to be called.** The federal government has created the National Do Not Call Registry - a free and easy way to reduce the telemarketing calls you get at home. To register or to get more information, visit [www.donotcall.gov](http://www.donotcall.gov) or call toll-free (888) 382-1222 from the phone you want to register.

### To Report a Scam

Fight telephone fraud. You can report telephone scam artists to the following agencies.

**☎ SD Division of Consumer Protection:**  
1-800-300-1986 (in-state only), (605) 773-4400  
or [www.state.sd.us/attorney/office/divisions/consumer](http://www.state.sd.us/attorney/office/divisions/consumer)

**☎ Federal Trade Commission:**  
1-877-382-4357 or [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov)

**☎ National Fraud Information Center:**  
1-800-876-7060 or [www.fraud.org](http://www.fraud.org)



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