



Charity scams

What are charity scams?

These scams try to take advantage of your generosity and kindness. They all involve a scammer collecting money by pretending to be a real charity. Not only do these scams cost people money, they also divert much needed donations away from legitimate charities and causes.

Often, the scammer will exploit a recent natural disaster or famine that has been in the news. Other scammers play on people's emotions by pretending to be from charities that help children who are ill.

Luckily these types of scams are not that common.

However you should always be on your guard against fake charities. The scammers can approach you in the street, by coming to your door, over the phone or on the internet.

Warning signs

- You have never heard of the charity before.
- The person who claims to be collecting donations on behalf of the charity approaches you face-to-face and does not have any identification. Remember that even if they do have identification, it could be forged or meaningless.
- The person tries to put pressure on you by making you feel guilty or selfish if you don't want to give them money.
- The person asking for money cannot or will not give you details about the charity, such as its full name, address or phone number.
- The person gets defensive if you ask any questions about what the charity does and how much of the donation gets taken up by costs.
- The person asks for a cash donation and they don't want to accept a cheque. Or, they want the cheque to be made out to them rather than to the charity.
- The person doesn't want to give you a receipt. Or, they give you a receipt that does not have the charity's details on it.

Protect yourself from charity scams

- Use your common sense: the offer may be a scam.
- If someone comes to your door, ask to see their identification. You do not have to let them in, and they must leave if you ask them to.
- ALWAYS get independent advice if an offer involves significant money, time or commitment.
- Do not agree to offers or deals straight away: tell the person that you are not interested or that you want to get some independent advice before making a decision.
- You can contact your local office of fair trading, ASIC or the ACCC for assistance.
- NEVER send money, or give credit card or online account details to anyone you do not know and trust.

- Do not give out your personal, credit card or online account details over the phone unless you made the call and the phone number came from a trusted source.
- Do not open suspicious or unsolicited emails (spam): delete them.

As well as following these specific tips, find out how to protect yourself from all sorts of other scams.

Do your homework

If you have any doubts at all about the person asking for money, DO NOT give them any cash, credit card or bank account details at all. If you want to make a donation to a worthy cause you should do this in your own time and not in response to a phone call, email or visit.

Legitimate charities are registered at the state or territory level. Call your local fair trading agency to check that the charity that has approached you is genuine. If the charity is genuine and you want to make a donation, get the charity's contact details from the phone book or a trusted web site. Don't rely on any phone number or website address given by the person who first called, visited or emailed you because they could be impersonating a legitimate charity. When you contact the charity, check to see if they have any fundraising campaigns taking place in your area. You should also find out if any donation you make is tax deductible. You can contact the Australian Taxation Office to check.

If the charity is selling raffle tickets, vouchers or other goods make sure you are happy with all the terms and conditions before agreeing.

Decide

If you do not want to donate any money, or you are happy with how much you may have donated to charities already, simply ignore the email or letter, hang up the phone or say no to the person at your door. You do not have to give any money at all.

If you come across a charity or cause that you think is worthwhile, you should do your homework before making any decision. Make sure that the person is who they say they are and that the charity is genuine.

Report them

If you think you have been approached by someone impersonating a legitimate charity, or by a fake charity, you can report a scam through the SCAMwatch website, www.scamwatch.gov.au. You should also be sure to warn your friends, family, colleagues and neighbours about the scammer.

Source and further information:

<http://www.scamwatch.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/694349>

Please assist our police by reporting all suspicious activity to: CRIME STOPPERS use: 1800 333 000.

**For police attendance use: 131 444.
But, for all life-threatening emergencies use: "0 0 0"**



Warning on scam 'AFP' email

Thursday, 02 July 2009

The Australian Federal Police (AFP) have become aware of a 'Scam' email in circulation that falsely claims to have been sent out by the AFP.

The fake email informs recipients that their credit card has been detected as being used in transactions linked to criminal organisations. It goes on to instruct the recipient to click onto a 'link' attached to the email.

The scam email further instructs the receiver not to contact either their bank or the local authorities under threat of legal action.

The AFP warns anyone receiving this email, or one like it **not to respond to it in any way.**

Anyone who receives this e-mail should delete it immediately. Generally these websites and emails attempt to lure customers into divulging personal information or downloading malicious software which can record and transmit the customer's key strokes.

The AFP would not send out an email asking members of the public to disclose personal or financial information about themselves.

Advice to the public who have received the hoax e-mail:

- Delete the e-mail from your Inbox and from your Deleted Items
- Do not click on the link embedded in the e-mail
- If you have clicked on the link to the website in this hoax e-mail and provided personal information, contact your bank immediately for advice
- Install and keep up-to-date anti-virus and firewall software on your computer
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A copy of the fake email can be seen at http://www.afp.gov.au/media_releases/national/2009/warning_on_scam_afp_email

Media enquiries:

AFP Media (Canberra): (02) 6275 7100
Source: http://www.afp.gov.au/media_releases/national/2009/warning_on_scam_afp_email

Assistant newsletter editor

I am looking for an assistant newsletter editor. Anyone interested in volunteering for this position should have computer and internet skills, as well as a fair knowledge of word processing. If you are interested, please contact editor Janet Ilchef at ilchef@orac.net.au

The ACT Neighbourhood Watch Inc (Association) Annual General Meeting

All members of NHW are invited to attend the Annual General Meeting of NHWACT to be held on

Thursday 13 August

at the

Ainslie Football & Social Club,
52 Wakefield Avenue, Ainslie,
commencing at **7.30 pm.**

Guest speaker is Commander Kevin Zuccato,
Deputy Chief Police Officer

Neighbourhood Watch 25th Anniversary

A dinner to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Neighbourhood Watch in the ACT is to be held in the Olympus Room, Hellenic Club, Phillip on Wednesday **23 September 2009 7pm for 7.30pm start.**

There will be a 2 course dinner with VIP guests attending. Drinks will be available from the bar.

Dress is strictly lounge suit for men and after 5 for women.

The community and all members and past members of ACT Neighbourhood Watch Inc (Association) are invited to celebrate the occasion of the 25th anniversary of Neighbourhood Watch in Canberra.

The cost is \$30 per person and is to be paid upon booking. Bookings and payment by cheque or money order payable to ACT Neighbourhood Watch Inc (Association) can be made to Brian Schiller 62861138 or Ursula Macdermott 62810673.

Woden SEE Change: Local people building a sustainable community

Thursday 6 August Reduce, reuse, recycle - reducing consumption & waste

Workshop :7.30 – 9.30 pm (Come at 7 pm for a drink and chat)

Where: Main Hall, St James Church, 40 Gillies St, Curtin

Cost: \$5 entry includes a drink and delicious home made snack

For bookings contact seechange.woden@gmail.com or call **Laura Stuart on 0403 243 156**

with assistance from an ACT Government Environment Grant.