

## **SCAMS – from the BBB – March 3, 2010**

### **809 Area Code Scam:**

The "809" scam has many mutations but they all involve a message to the consumer (email, phone) requesting that they immediately call or fax a number in the "809" area code or some other area code in the Caribbean for various reasons like avoiding litigation, receiving information about someone who has been arrested or died, winning a prize, or getting a job.

Most people are not aware that they are making an international call when they dial the "809" area code, since no international codes are required.

The problem is that some phone numbers in the "809" area code are "pay-per-call" numbers (like 900 numbers in the US) - but there are no legal requirements that callers be informed that they are being charged extra in the Caribbean. When you return one of these "pay-per-call" 809 calls, the scammers try to keep you on the phone as long as possible, and you may be charged very high rates for the call, reportedly up to \$25 per minute.

It is difficult to get credit for these charges if you do get scammed since you did make the call, and resolving the problem involves getting credit from international phone companies.

Since there are now many area codes in the Caribbean, this scam is no longer confined to just the 809 area code. [www.scambusters.org/809Scam.html](http://www.scambusters.org/809Scam.html)

### **Lottery Scam Twist**

We are all aware of the lottery scam, recently a consumer indicated that the scammers contacted her elderly mother and told her that she won a BMW and money. The scammer asked that they provide proof of insurance for the car and 500.00. We believe they are mainly after the money, but the proof of insurance could lead to identity theft if any consumer falls for the scam.



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