

Scammers target families, alleging loved ones' injuries

Written by gallupsun
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Staff Reports

The Gallup Police Department is warning area residents to be on the lookout for scam artists who are trying to defraud people by claiming one of their loved ones has been kidnapped or hurt in an accident.

Gallup Police Captain Marinda Spencer said police responded to a call about 9:51 am April 9, from an individual who said he received a call on his cell phone from (524) 939-343-567.

The caller stated they had the person's daughter and would take her to Mexico if they weren't given \$300. The family got in touch with Gallup police who were able to determine that the daughter was safe and had not been kidnapped.

GPD officers called other law enforcement agencies and found other cases where someone would call someone and say that a relative had been arrested and needed bail money. Or they would advise them that there is a warrant out for their arrest and they will be arrested if they don't pay their fines.

In another version, scammers would tell the family that their son or daughter has been involved in an accident.

Spencer said a report published in the eastern part of the country said the scammers would call the person who they planned to say was involved in the accident and ask specific questions, which they would then record and use to scam their relatives.

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Providence Police Captain Michael Correla said the questions are generic so they don't raise anyone's suspicion. What they are trying to get, he said, is to have you say in your voice, 'I'm ok,' said Correla.

"Reassuring, yet a sense of urgency," he added. They then call a family member and make up a story of the person being involved in an accident.

Spencer said if you get a phone call from a phone number you don't know and are told that someone is involved in an accident or has been kidnapped, slow the process down and call the police before you go to the bank to get money or go home to get your money.

You can call the Gallup Police at (505) 722-2002 to file a report or, if it's an emergency, call 911. The non-emergency number is (605) 863-9365.