

MCSO warns of warrant-money scam

Written by Staff Reports
Friday, 07 December 2018 09:13



Man claims to be police, demands money

The McKinley County Sheriff's Office has issued a warning to area residents about a scam. The scam entailed an individual who said he was a police officer and demanded money to clear up outstanding warrants he claimed the victim had.

At least one person in the area fell for the scam, and local law enforcement officials ask anyone who receives such a phone call to get in touch with the Sheriff's Office or the Gallup Police Department immediately.

MCSO first learned of the scam Nov. 17, when a man reported he had been the victim of one such incident.

The man, who was not identified, said it all began with a phone call from a male who claimed he was "Detective Williams with the Gallup Police."

Williams reportedly told the victim he had two outstanding warrants and he needed to clear this

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up or he faced arrest. The victim said the call “freaked” him out.

He said he talked to the man for an hour and 27 minutes, and at the end, he was given another number to call to make arrangements to pay to for the warrants.

The victim checked the caller’s number, and it was one of the numbers for the Sheriff’s Office. However, there is an app that allows a caller to choose any number to display on the receiver’s phone.

The victim followed directions to go and obtain six prepaid cards, five for \$500 each and one for \$200. He was then allegedly told to scratch off the back and give the man the number so he could verify he had gotten the card.

During the time he spoke to the caller, the victim said whenever he hesitated, he was asked if he was refusing to follow a direct order. The victim said the man who called him sounded militaristic and told him what to do step by step.

He said he also heard sounds of people talking in the background, and it sounded as if the caller was calling from a police station.

Later, when he wondered if he had been scammed, the victim called the second number back and got an automated answering system. The victim told police he was tired and worn out and not in his right mind at the time of the incident, which contributed to his failure to realize it was a scam until later.

Police authorities said law enforcement agencies and courts do not call people and ask them to pay off their warrants over the phone.

If you receive such a call, hang up and call MCSO at (505) 722-7205 or the Gallup Police Department at (505) 863-9365.

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