



CHATHAM COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

April 8, 2021

Chatham County Police Department Reminds Residents to Stay Alert for Phone Scams

Requesting Payment with Gift Cards Is Red Flag

Chatham County, GA (April 8, 2021) – The Chatham County Police Department is reminding residents that phone scammers continue to cheat victims in our area out of thousands of dollars, and are urging everyone to keep their guard up against this kind of crime.

“The best defense against a phone scam is awareness and prevention,” says Chatham County Police Chief Jeff Hadley. “These crooks are often calling from another country, and can be virtually impossible to track down. And, there is very little chance that the victim will ever recover the money lost to these scams.”

Hadley says law enforcement throughout the area continue to receive calls from victims – many of them elderly – who have been a target of a phone scam. The scammers call with a variety of reasons they need immediate payment --everything from posing as a kidnapper, bill collector, law enforcement officer, IRS agent, or even someone who accidentally deposited money in the victim's account that they need returned. Sometimes, scammers even email 'documentation' that they say backs up their claim. One thing these scammers have in common is that they ask for the payments to be made in gift cards.

“When someone asks for a payment with a gift card, hang up,” Hadley warns. “And, remember that it is ok to end a call without making payment. Tell the person you will call them back. If someone is a legitimate caller, they will give you time to look through your own records and decide your next steps.”

Hadley also encourages people to talk with elderly family members and friends to make sure they are aware of phone scam tactics, and to never purchase gift cards to make a payment to someone over the phone.

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