



Simsbury Police Department

"In Partnership With Our Community"



Potential Ebola Scams

October 17, 2014

The unprecedented Ebola epidemic in West Africa has caused widespread alarm and numerous fatalities, which has left many people asking how they can help. The same altruism has led opportunistic con artists to set up phony Ebola-themed charities.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) is urging that potential donors do some research to ensure that the donation goes to a reputable organization that will use the money as promised.

Remember, urgent appeals for aid that are made by phone or mail, on websites, or even in person, may not be legitimate.

If you are considering a charitable donation, please consider the following tips:

- Donate to charities you know and trust; ones that have a proven track record.
- Be alert for charities that seem to have sprung up overnight in connection with current events.
- Check out the charity on the Better Business Bureau's Wise Giving Alliance, Charity Navigator, Charity Watch, GuideStar, IRS Select Check, or Foundation Center.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions; ask a caller who they are working for or what percentage of the donation goes to charity.
- Never provide personal identifying information (bank account information, Social Security Number, etc.). Legitimate agencies will never ask for this information.
- Never click on links or open attachments. Scammers have become adept at using realistic looking logos and colors. Clicking on a link or logo can download malware on your computer.
- Verify the origins of any email or text messages soliciting donations.
- Don't assume that charity messages posted on social media are legitimate. Research the charitable organization yourself.
- Never send cash.
- Find out if the charity or fundraiser must be registered in your state by contacting your state attorney general or secretary of state.

Please contact PFC. Lauren Devin at 860-658-3131 with any questions or concerns.