



California Public Utilities Commission

505 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco

CONSUMER ADVISORY

***72 Phone Scam**

Consumers should be aware of a phone scam that can leave you with high phone bills. It starts when scammers call you pretending to be with the police department or public safety agencies or hospitals. They may make up a story about your child or other loved one being hurt in an accident. They then tell you to call the officer at the scene of the accident by dialing *72 and a phone number they provide you. **DO NOT DO THIS!**

By dialing *72 at the beginning of a call, you will activate call forwarding, if you subscribe to it, and all calls to your phone number will be forwarded to the phone number that the scammers gave you. When that happens, you may be billed a charge each time a call is forwarded to the other number. You may also be billed long distance charges, including collect call charges if applicable. Calls will continue to forward until you turn off the call forwarding feature. In some cases *73 turns off call forwarding, but that may vary depending on which phone company and the type of call forwarding service you subscribe to.



By getting you to activate your call forwarding feature and providing you with a number (it could be to an expensive pay-per-call service, the East Coast, etc.), the scammers can then call that number by dialing your phone number and you will be billed the additional charges. Don't let this happen to you!

You may have call forwarding as a feature of your landline or wireless service. If you are unsure if you have it, ask your phone company. Also not all call forwarding is activated by *72. If you have call forwarding, find out how to use it, as well as all your other services.

If this does happen to you, call your phone company to dispute the charges and report it to the California Public Utilities Commission's consumer hotline at 800-649-7570.

For more information on the CPUC, please visit www.CalPhoneInfo.com or www.cpuc.ca.gov

