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BULLETIN

TORRANCE POLICE DEPARTMENT
COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

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Recent Identity Theft Scams via Unsolicited Phone Calls

The Torrance Police Department has been receiving a number of phone calls and emails regarding a recent increase in suspicious unsolicited phone calls from various “creditors” wherein the “creditors” ask for the victim’s personal account information.

On 16 February 2009 a Torrance resident received a phone call from an unknown subject who identified himself as a member of the “South Bay Finance Club”. The person on the phone explained that his Visa credit card was being compromised right now and he needed to suspend the card immediately. The resident said he was not thinking and provided the caller his credit card number and also provided his PIN and other personal information needed to access his account.

On 17 February 2009 another Torrance resident received a phone call from an unknown subject who identified himself as a “South Bay Credit Union” representative. The subject stated he needed to update his Visa card. The resident wisely immediately hung up on the caller and his account was not compromised. The resident then immediately called the Torrance Police Department to report this incident.

We have received a number of calls from residents stating they are receiving unsolicited phone calls asking for their personal bank and/or credit card information.

Citizens are reminded to not give out any personal information over the phone unless you initiate the contact. We have seen recent incidents of telephone scams used to obtain personal information such as criminals posing as creditors (banks/credit card companies) and court officers stating there is a warrant for your arrest from a delinquent jury-duty notice. The bottom line is DO NOT give out your personal information over the phone unless you called the person and are sure of who you are talking to or can verify the validity of the caller by asking for a callback number then check the phonebook and/or bank statements before calling the number.

For further safety tips, check the Torrance Police Department website at www.torrancepd.org or <http://www.tornet.com/TPD/14620.htm>. The Torrance Police also offer Community Safety Training seminars that are free of charge and open to all Torrance residents. These seminars cover a wide range of safety related information and are offered on a quarterly basis.

Any citizens with further questions regarding this crime can contact the Community Affairs Division at CommunityAffairs@tornet.com