



**CALLERS CLAIMING TO WORK FOR
THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION
PROMPT WARNING TO KEEP PERSONAL INFO SAFE**

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MADISON – The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection is helping to spread the word about an unusually high number of complaints to the Social Security Administration from Wisconsin residents about “phishing” phone calls.

According to the Social Security Administration (SSA), Wisconsinites have been reporting phone calls from persons claiming to work for the SSA. The caller asks for private information, such as the person’s social security number (SSN), in order to “re-issue a Medicare Card” or some other similar excuse.

“The Social Security Administration does not need to ask you for your social security number,” says Janet Jenkins, Administrator of the Division of Trade and Consumer Protection’s Wisconsin Office of Privacy Protection. “Alarms should go off in your mind anytime someone contacts you out of the blue and asks for personal or financial information. Governmental agencies and legitimate businesses simply don’t do that.”

Do not trust what your Caller ID says either. It can be made to give whatever name and number the caller wants.

The SSA reminds consumers that except for employers and financial institutions that need your social security number for tax reporting purposes, you are not required to give out your SSN.

“Before giving any confidential information, at least make sure that the organization or business asking for it is who it claims to be,” Jenkins advises. One way to check is to look up an organization or business in the phone book or online, and then call directly to verify any requests.

If you suspect someone is phishing for your private information or if you inadvertently gave out confidential information, the Office of Privacy Protection can help. Contact it at:

Wisconsin Office of Privacy Protection
DATCPWisconsinPrivacy@wisconsin.gov
Toll-free Hotline – 1-800-422-7128

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