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Officials warn residents to be alert, check things out before donating

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By Ashley Rittenhouse â€“ The Marietta Times (arittenhouse@mariettatimes.com) , The Marietta Times

Law enforcement officials are reminding residents to find out whether solicitations for monetary donations are legitimate or not before giving, as this is a popular time of year for scammers to spring into action.

Employees at Marietta Home Health Services and Hospice were notified that scammers called two residents just last week.

â€œTheyâ€™re saying theyâ€™re from Marietta Hospice and asking if theyâ€™d like to donate money on oneâ€™s behalf,â€• said Taylor Daugherty, volunteer coordinator for the agency. â€œWe do not do that.â€

Hospice provides in-home or homelike care for patients diagnosed with terminal illness.

Daugherty said those who received the calls are family members of people who passed away recently but received hospice care before their death.

â€œWe think whoever did it checked out the obituaries,â€• she said.

Daugherty noted that in some cases, those who receive hospice care decide to include in their obituary a note that all donations can be made to the agency and the scammers probably spotted this.

She said fortunately, the residents had a feeling something wasnâ€™t right and they did not agree to donate any money. The incidents have been reported to the Washington County Sheriffâ€™s Office.

Sheriff Larry Mincks said residents need to be cautious when it comes to donating money for any cause.

â€œIf you receive a phone call, check with the agency that is soliciting to see if they even make phone calls,â€• he said. â€œThere are a number of good organizations out there that are in need of money this time of yearâ€¦but be careful who youâ€™re sending it to.â€•

Mincks noted that his office receives information on a regular basis about scams that have taken place both over the phone and through the Internet.

â€œItâ€™s not an unusual occurrence,â€• he said.

Daugherty added that the agency does accept donations on an ongoing basis and they can be dropped off or mailed to 210 N. Seventh St., Suite 400, Marietta, Ohio 45750.

â€œWe use those funds for a patient who needs resources that canâ€™t be covered through hospice, for example, if thereâ€™s a blizzard and they canâ€™t afford that monthâ€™s bill on the heat,â€• she said. â€œ keeping the patient comfortable.â€•

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