



SCAM ALERT #4

Protect your account number; avoid unauthorized debits

One of the biggest tools in a scammer's repertoire is the ability to make people believe that by providing just a little information, they can take advantage of a great offer. However, providing information, especially your SEFCU account number, to callers you don't know can mean financial loss – not gain. Be wary. In recent months, a number of questionable companies have debited consumers banking accounts without their authorization.

One of the primary methods used in these false billing scams occurs when a caller is asked for personal financial information, including their account or debit card number, in order to take advantage of a special offer. For example, you might be presented with the seemingly real opportunity to “receive a \$200 gas card for just \$1.95, to cover the cost of shipping and handling.” However, after the debit for shipping is made, other unauthorized debits appear on their account, usually by the same company who made the original \$1.95 withdrawal. And, the additional withdrawals are in much larger amounts.

To protect yourself against this scam, use caution when giving out any personal information, but especially financial account information. In addition, carefully and regularly review your account activity via SEFCU OnLine or your periodic statements and report any unauthorized withdrawals or suspicious activity to SEFCU immediately.

SEFCU is committed to helping members protect themselves against fraud. This is the fourth in a series of SCAM ALERTS to educate members about deceptive activities that could harm members' financial security. While we cannot advise members of every scam, we hope the series will advance awareness of privacy and security issues.