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Sent: Tuesday, April 16, 2013 3:31 PM
To:
Subject: Attorney General Urges Caution on Marathon Bombing Appeals



Attorney General Urges Caution on Marathon Bombing Appeals

In the wake of the tragic Boston Marathon bombings, Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum is warning Oregon consumers to be on the lookout for phony charities soliciting funds for the victims.

Scam artists are becoming increasingly adept at exploiting disasters for personal gain. According to news accounts, a fake Twitter account appeared almost immediately after the bombings in Boston called @_BostonMarathon offering to donate \$1 for every retweet. The Twitter account was quickly suspended after users warned the account was fake.

"Scammers came out in force after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, after Hurricane Katrina, and after Superstorm Sandy," said Ellen Klem, Director of Consumer Outreach and Education. "They'll try once again after Monday's senseless bombing. Don't let them prosper off the tragedy. Be generous, but skeptical."

Consumers should remember the following tips:

- Do not give out personal information such as credit card or bank account numbers over the phone.
- Checks should always be made payable to the organization not the person collecting the donation.
- Beware of callers who want your money fast. When solicited by phone, always ask the caller to send you written materials about the charity. No legitimate organization will insist that you donate immediately
- Do not donate cash. Legitimate charities will be pleased to receive a contribution by check. Don't send contributions with a "runner," by wire or overnight parcel pick-up service.
- Be sure you are contributing to a legitimate organization registered with the Oregon Department of Justice by searching the Department's online database at www.oregonconsumer.gov or by calling 971-673-1880. You can also visit www.guidestar.org, a national clearinghouse of information about charities and their performance.

The Oregon Department of Justice, a national leader in policing charities, licenses and regulates more than 18,000 non-profits. In 2012, the Department took legal action against more than 20 non-profits for misleading solicitations.

Anyone who thinks they may have been contacted by a scammer should call the DOJ's Consumer Protection Hotline at 1-877-877-9392 or go to the Oregon Department of Justice web site: www.oregonconsumer.gov.

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