



HEALTH OFFICER'S NOTICE:

Anne Arundel County Department of Health Warns of Telephone Scam Targeting Restaurants

December 22, 2010 – Anne Arundel County restaurant owners and staff should be on the alert for suspicious calls from someone claiming to be a health inspector. These calls appear to be part of a scam targeting restaurants nationwide and in Canada.

The Housing and Food Protection Program has been contacted by County restaurant managers who have reported receiving calls from individuals claiming to be from the Department of Health. The callers requested business and personal information, such as business account numbers, employee IDs and phone numbers. The scammer later sent a text message requesting that restaurant managers call several other phone numbers. These calls may be billed to the restaurant's phone service and may also be used to aid the scammers in setting up phony accounts for Craigslist and other auction websites.

Food service inspections are always unannounced, and the Department of Health does not call restaurants to schedule routine inspections. The Department also does not provide or request any account codes over the phone.

All Anne Arundel County residents need to be wary of unsolicited calls requesting information. Never provide PIN numbers, passwords or other personal information to a caller you do not know. They may be attempting to steal your identity or defraud you. Do not call back unknown numbers. Restaurant owners and others who receive similar calls should contact local law enforcement and the [Federal Trade Commission](#).

If there is a question about Anne Arundel County food service inspections, call the Housing and Food Protection Program at 410-222-7364.