



# NEWS FROM SCDCA

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS  
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1.800.922.1594 (toll free in SC)

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### *Scam Alert: Fake Charities*

**Columbia, SC...**With the recent tragedies in Boston and Texas, the South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs (SCDCA) is urging consumers to be wary of scammers who pose as charities.

Scam artists follow the headlines and often tailor their fraud attempts to current events in an effort to profit from consumer kindness. As SCDCA saw with the Gulf Coast Oil Spill, we anticipate scammers will contact consumers in an effort to solicit money for phony charities to benefit the victims of the Boston Marathon bombings or West, Texas fire.

Before giving, consumers should keep these simple tips in mind to avoid charity scams:

- **Research.** Never give to a charity you know nothing about. Request written literature and a copy of the charity's latest annual report. Make sure the charity is registered with the Secretary of State's office ([www.scsos.com](http://www.scsos.com)).
- **Double-check the charity's name.** Fake charities often use names that are similar to legitimate, well-known charities to gain your trust or confuse you.
- **Ignore high-pressure tactics.** Do not let yourself be pressured into contributing on the spot. If you feel uncomfortable, hang up!
- **Pop-up charities.** Be wary of any charity that suddenly springs up when a crisis occurs. Only donate to organizations that are well-established, well-known, and well-respected.

For more information on charity scams and other types of scams, contact SCDCA at 1.800.922.1594, or online at [www.consumer.sc.gov](http://www.consumer.sc.gov).

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SCDCA aims to protect consumers from inequities in the marketplace through advocacy, complaint mediation, enforcement and education. To file a complaint or get information on consumer issues, visit [www.consumer.sc.gov](http://www.consumer.sc.gov) or call toll-free, 1.800.922.1594.

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