

# Caddo Sheriff warns citizens of scam

Wednesday, September 3, 2014

Caddo Sheriff Steve Prator is warning citizens to beware of a scam where callers claim to have information about a friend or family member in need of help.

Recent calls to citizens in our area aim to convince the person receiving the call that their loved one is either in jail, stranded in a foreign country, or involved in some type of emergency and needs money transferred to them or put on a money card. The scammer may represent himself as a police officer.

Prator said the con artist will insist that the money request be kept secret, allowing them to receive it before the scam is exposed. The scam is not new to the area and has made the rounds across the country, he said. Scammers are able to obtain information through social networking sites and email.

The Sheriff's Office and the Federal Trade Commission say you should never give money to a stranger or react without first verifying an emergency. If someone calls or sends a message claiming to be a family member or a friend desperate for money:

- Resist the urge to act immediately, no matter how dramatic the story is.
- Verify the person's identity by asking questions that a stranger couldn't possibly answer.
- Call a phone number for your family member or friend that you know to be genuine.
- Check the story out with someone else in your family or circle of friends, even if you've been told to keep it a secret.
- Don't wire money — or send a check or money order by overnight delivery or courier.