



BUTTE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY



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PRESS RELEASE

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PHONY COMPUTER TECH SUPPORT SCAM SURFACES LOCALLY

District Attorney Mike Ramsey announced today his Consumer Protection Unit has received several inquiries about a computer scam in our area. Butte County residents have reported receiving phone calls claiming to be from "Microsoft" or a company called "Windows Care Corporation" (or numerous other variations). The caller, usually with a heavy East Indian accent, claims internet records shows the resident's computer is infected. The caller then has the resident turn on their computer, go online, and download a program that allows the caller to take over the resident's computer remotely. The caller claims this is necessary to "clean the computer of virus infections."

Ramsey warned the caller is actually seeking to take control of the resident's computer so he can:

- Install malicious software
- Adjust settings in order to leave the computer vulnerable for later attack
- Search for personal information to commit Identity Theft and other crimes.

Ramsey said Microsoft Corporation has confirmed it does not make unsolicited phone calls to help with computers. He said this particular scam started back in 2008 and was very prevalent in Europe and Australia. It seems the scam has migrated to the USA.

Ramsey warned no one should allow someone to take over your computer remotely unless you have previously contacted a computer repair company or individual to allow them remote access. Unsolicited requests to remotely access your computer should be avoided at all costs. He warned residents that if they received a phone call like this -- hang up.

Ramsey said his Consumer Protection Unit has posted several videos and resources on the Butte County District Attorney website so citizens can take the appropriate actions and educate themselves on this scam. He further reminded everyone the DA website has additional resources on a variety of consumer scams and frauds.

The District Attorney Consumer Fraud page is located at:

<http://www.buttecounty.net/da/Eco.htm>