

Westminster Police Department

PRESS RELEASE

Kevin Baker, *Chief of Police*

8200 Westminster Blvd.
Westminster, CA 92683
(714) 898-3315

Corporal Phuong Pham, PIO
Office: (714) 548-3755
Media Hotline: (714) 548-3213



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CRIME WARNING

“EDISON SCAM” TARGETS LOCAL BUSINESSES

In the past couple of months, the Westminster Police Department took several reports involving grand theft from local Asian businesses on the East and West side of the city. In all of the incidents, an employee of the business received a phone call from a male suspect who falsely identified himself as an Edison Company representative. The suspect informed the employees that their business was past due on their electric bill; and, if immediate payment was not made, the power would be turned off. The employee was provided a specific cash amount to be paid.

The suspect instructed the employees to purchase “Green Dot” credit cards from local CVS, Walmart and 7-Eleven stores to pay the past due amount. “Green Dot” credit cards are pre-paid cards that can be purchased at convenience stores with cash and cannot be traced as traditional credit cards. The suspect in all of the incidents had the employees stay on the phone with him during the purchase of the “Green Dot” credit cards. The suspect then instructed the employees to provide him with the credit card numbers on the back of the card.

After the transactions, the employees found their businesses were not past due on their electric bills and that no legitimate Edison representative had contacted them.

Incidents involving the theft of money and property through “scams” are becoming increasingly common. The Westminster Police Department advises businesses and citizens to be cautious when contacted by people under these circumstances. It is always wise to confirm the identity of people when contacted in these situations.

The Westminster Police Department asks citizens to immediately report such incidents by calling 714-898-3315. Anonymous tips can also be reported to Orange County Crime Stoppers at 1-855-TIP-OCCS; or visit their website at <http://www.occrimestoppers.org/>

<http://www.westminster-ca.gov/depts/police/>