

# FRAUD ALERT!

August 2007

## SCAM TARGETING FAMILIES OF MILITARY MEMBERS

The Federal Trade Commission is warning consumers about a scam targeting families of military members. A caller, claiming to work for the Red Cross, notifies an individual that their family member has been injured while on duty. To get immediate aid to the injured service member, the caller says, paperwork must be completed, and personal information must be verified.

The FTC, the nation's consumer protection agency, says this scheme is a variation of "phishing" – a technique identity thieves use to get personal or financial information from unwary consumers. The identity thief claims to represent a trusted source – a bank, a government agency, or in this case, The American Red Cross – to get someone to divulge their personal information. The FTC urges military family members not to give out personal information on the phone if they are contacted by an individual they don't know – or via the Internet if the message comes via e-mail.

According to the American Red Cross, its representatives typically do not contact military members or their families directly.

To report a phishing incident, visit [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov) or call 1-877-FTC-HELP. Because victims of phishing schemes can become victims of identity theft, you also may want to visit [www.ftc.gov/idtheft](http://www.ftc.gov/idtheft).

The FTC works for the consumer to prevent fraudulent, deceptive and unfair business practices in the marketplace and to provide information to help consumers spot, stop, and avoid them. To file a complaint or to get free information call toll-free, 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357); TTY: 1-866-653-4261.

**For more information or to report a scam in Bucks County-  
contact any one of the Task Force members:**

**BUCKS COUNTY CRIMES AGAINST OLDER ADULTS TASK FORCE-  
FIGHTING ABUSE, NEGLECT, AND EXPLOITATION OF OLDER ADULTS IN BUCKS COUNTY  
[WWW.CRIMESAGAINSTOLDERADULTSBUCKS.ORG](http://WWW.CRIMESAGAINSTOLDERADULTSBUCKS.ORG)  
**1-800-490-8505****

**Bucks County District Attorney's Office**  
215-348-6344  
**Bucks County Consumer Protection**  
215-348-6060  
**Bucks County Register of Wills**  
215-348-6265

**Bucks County Area Agency on Aging**  
215-348-0510  
**Network of Victim Assistance**  
1-800-675-6900  
**Bucks County Coroner**  
215-348-3852