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DCSD

Debt Counsel for Seniors & the Disabled

Counterfeit US Treasury checks are being sent. The scam works like this. The consumer gets an email from someone inviting them to become a distributor for flat screen TVs. If the consumer responds, the sender of the email (the crook) claims to work for the US Government and claims that this is all part of the “Stimulus Program”. He is even going to send a check to help get things set up. The check, usually written for around \$8,900, looks just like a US Treasury refund check. The consumer is instructed to cash the check, deposit most of it, keep some for set-up and wire the rest back to the “US Government official”. The check is counterfeit! Don’t fall for this crazy scam! If you receive anything like this, let your BBB know or shred it! Thanks to the Spokane BBB for their investigation.

Economic Stimulus Checks! Did you really think they wouldn’t try as many ways as possible to get your check? Consumers have called reporting to us that they are receiving Emails and phone calls about direct deposit into their bank accounts if they give them back account numbers or routing information. In some cases, crooks are even asking for their Social Security numbers.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT ROLLING OUT SOCIAL SECURITY DEBIT CARD

For millions of Americans, accessing their Social Security benefits is now just a card swipe away. A new debit card being offered by the Treasury Department gives nearly 4 million recipients who have no bank accounts an alternative to paper checks that they must cash, usually at a price. The new debit card, issued by Comerica Bank, was quietly marketed to nearly 3.5 million recipients of Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) this spring. It’s now available to any benefit recipient through www.usdirectexpress.com.

The new debit card will eliminate the need for consumers without bank accounts to use costly check-cashing services, the Treasury Department says. It will also save the government money. The Treasury estimates that if all 4 million recipients without bank accounts signed up for the card, it would save \$42 million a year.

As with any other debit card, using it won’t always be free. For instance, holders will get one free ATM withdrawal per month. After that, they’ll be charged 90 cents for each withdrawal. A fee of 75 cents per month also applies if cardholders want paper statements mailed to them. Still, the fees are among the lowest in the industry for such services.

About 80% of the 57.3 million Social Security and SSI recipients have their benefits directly deposited into their bank accounts. The challenge will be to get the remaining consumers to switch from checks to electronic payments such as direct deposit or the new debit card.

To sign up for the card call Direct Express at 1-877-212-9991 or go online at www.usdirectexpress.com