

Phone scammers dialing South Tahoe numbers looking for cash

A new twist on an old telephone scam has resulted in one South Shore resident being swindled out of \$5,000.

The South Lake Tahoe Police Department says a number of these calls are coming into the community.

“The deal goes like this: Potential victim receives a call on home or cell phone from a person representing themselves as with South Lake Tahoe Police Department, El Dorado sheriff’s, a law firm or a federal law enforcement agency, like DEA or FBI. They are told, very aggressively, that they or someone dear to them will be arrested shortly if they do not pay money for some claimed debt,” El Dorado County Assistant District Attorney Hans Uthe said. “If they bite, they are told to wire funds to a given location, which is typically off-shore, like the Dominican Republic.”

Uthe says if people get such a call, they should not send money, at least not without checking with local law enforcement.

“Law enforcement agencies do not arrest people for non-payment of private debt, other than perhaps child support,” Uthe said.

The calls are likely originating off shore, so not much can be done to stop them.