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Beware Census scammers

While we have not yet received any reports of this in Kansas City, I wanted to give everyone a heads-up that the Better Business Bureau has warned scammers might take the opportunity, during the 2010 Census, to attempt to steal victims' personal information. All citizens are encouraged to use caution when releasing any personal information to anyone. The Census may be taken by mail, telephone, or a personal visit. According to the BBB:

• If a U.S. Census worker knocks on your door, they will have a badge, a handheld device, a Census Bureau canvas bag and a confidentiality notice. Ask to see their identification and their badge before answering their questions. However, you should never invite anyone you don't know into your home.

• Census workers are currently only knocking on doors to verify address information. Do not give your Social Security number, credit card or banking information to anyone, even if they claim they need it for the U.S. Census. While the Census Bureau might ask for basic financial information, such as a salary range, it will not ask for Social Security, bank account or credit card numbers nor will employees solicit donations.

• Eventually, Census workers may contact you by telephone, mail or in person at home. However, they will not contact you by e-mail, so be on the look out for e-mail scams impersonating the Census. Never click on a link or open any attachments in an e-mail that are supposedly from the U.S. Census Bureau.

For more information, check our Fraud Unit web page or the Better Business Bureau.

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