

Consumer Corner: No Call List Doesn't Stop All Calls

"I'm on the Do Not Call list, so why do I keep getting these phone calls?"

Unfortunately, this is one of the most common questions our office receives. While placing your number on the Do Not Call list is a great way to reduce the number of unsolicited telemarketing calls you receive at home, it's not perfect and won't stop the worst actors from calling you.

Kansas enacted the No Call Act in 2002 to give consumers the ability to opt out of receiving unsolicited telemarketing calls. In 2014, the Legislature updated our state law to allow our office to enforce the No Call Act when telemarketers call consumers' cellphones.

You can register your phone number either by visiting our consumer protection website at www.InYourCornerKansas.org or by calling (888) 382-1222 from the number you wish to register. Once you've registered, telemarketers have 30 days to remove you from their calling lists. Registration does not expire, so once you've registered, you don't need to do it again, unless you get a new phone number.

Registering your number will stop legitimate telemarketing companies – those that follow the law -- from calling. But, it won't stop fraudsters and criminals who have no regard for the Do Not Call list. These are the ones who especially get on our nerves. Often, these are pre-recorded "robocalls" made from telemarketers and computers in foreign countries, which makes it hard – often impossible – for us to track them down for violating the law.

The best advice when you get these types of calls is to hang up immediately. Even if the call says to press a number to be removed from their list, don't do it. This will just confirm to the robocaller that your number is connected to a real, live person, and will probably result in more calls.

There may be good news on the horizon for stopping these types of calls. Recently, the Federal Communications Commission adopted new rules allowing phone companies to adopt technology which will allow you to block robocalls. I'm hopeful the phone companies will work quickly to implement this service to give you the power to decide which calls you want to accept.

Remember too, the No Call Act does not apply to a company you've done business with within the past eighteen months. They are allowed to call you, unless you've requested them to stop. There are also exceptions for charitable solicitations and political calls, so long as those calls are not also trying to sell you something.

To register for the Do Not Call list, file a complaint or learn more, visit our consumer protection website at www.InYourCornerKansas.org.