FLORIDA CONSUMER eNEWSLETTER
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FLORIDA DO NOT CALL

Advancements in technology have greatly improved telecommunications, but they have also resulted in an increase of unwanted sales calls. Fortunately, Floridians can protect themselves from unwanted calls and text by subscribing their residential, mobile or paging device telephone numbers to the Florida Do Not Call list, which is maintained by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

It is unlawful to make telephone sales calls before 8 a.m. or after 9 p.m. local time or to block the solicitor's name or telephone number to the party called. The use of auto dialers with pre-recorded messages is also not permitted in Florida.

The most frequent violations of the Do Not Call law occur because a solicitor: failed to identify his or her true first and last names and the business on whose behalf he or she is soliciting immediately upon making contact; called a telephone number on the Do Not Call list (subscriber); or made a pre-recorded sales call to either a subscriber or non-subscriber.

Following the elimination of the subscription fees in 2012, the Florida Do Not Call list has jumped from less than 72,000 to more than 1 million subscribers.

Florida residents can subscribe to the Florida Do Not Call list by visiting FreshFromFlorida.com or calling 1-800-HELP-FLA (435-7352). Residential, mobile and paging device telephone numbers are eligible to be on the list.

REPORTING VIOLATIONS IS CRITICAL TO THE SUCCESS OF THE PROGRAM

Consumer complaints enablethe Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to penalize violators of the Florida Do Not Call program. All violations should be reported to the department. Complaints can be filed online at FreshFromFlorida.com or by calling 1-800-HELP-FLA (435-7352) to request a Do Not Call complaint form by mail/email. When filing a complaint, attempt to obtain as much information as possible from the caller, including the name of the person making the call, the company calling, telephone number of the company, date and time of the call and what product or service they were offering.

Keep in mind that some unsolicited sales calls are exempt from the provisions of the law. Solicitors may call if: a prior or existing business relationship exists, in response to an express request of the person called, from a newspaper publisher, in connection with an existing debt or contract, in response to a yard sign or other advertisement or not selling a product or service. Additional exemptions include charitable organizations seeking donations, political candidates and political parties seeking donation, research or survey companies seeking an opinion and collection agencies trying to locate a debtor or collect on a debt.

For more information about the Florida Do Not Call list or to become a subscriber, visit FreshFromFlorida.com or call 1-800-HELP-FLA (435-7352) or 1-800-FL-AYUDA (352-9832) en Español.

Subscribe to Commissioner Adam H. Putnam's weekly email now in order to receive updates on important Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services news.

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Adam H. Putnam, Commissioner

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