

## City Code Chatter — It may be too good to be true

Written by Chris Lee

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With the shape of today's economy, some people are looking in different directions for income. Most of these decisions are good and beneficial to those individuals, but one person has taken it too far. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

It has been brought to the Holyoke Police Department's attention a single individual has been making harassing and/or threatening phone calls to various residents of Holyoke.

According to Holyoke P.D., the individual does not reside in the United States and is connected to at least one current fraud investigation and several harassment investigations.

The phone number involved with the current investigation is a 1-876 prefix that is registered to a Caribbean cell phone service provider and will show up as from Kingston, Jamaica.

The caller identifies himself as a friend or relative of a local resident and attempts to gain information such as unlisted telephone numbers. If the caller doesn't gain the information he is seeking, he makes repeated return calls to the person trying to threaten or coerce them into providing him with information.

The suspect in the most recent series of calls has identified himself as the grandson of a local resident, but did not pronounce the resident's name correctly. The suspect has used the first name of "Galimore" or "Dalimore" and several last names including the last name "Smith."

Although not confirmed or entirely accurate, it may be advised that any unusual calls from a 1-876 prefix may be related to a scam of the elderly or connected to this harassment investigation. If someone is not expecting a call from a 1-876 prefix or from someone they know in the Caribbean, such as Jamaica, the Dominican Republic or some other part of the Caribbean, Holyoke P.D. advises against answering the call.

A phone number that has come up consistently has been 876-467-0889. While it looks like a regular toll-free 1-800, 866, 877 or 888 prefixed number, it is not and the associated charges may be anywhere from \$10-100 a minute.

This reporter received an e-mail from a relative about the scam about a month ago and AT&T corporation even has a warning on its Web site about this kind of scam regarding the 876 prefix.

Other scams attempted include faking a package from a mail carrier that must be pre-paid by Western Union. Another is a family member that is in Canada, or elsewhere, that needs bailed out but never properly identifies themselves at the beginning of the call.

### **Door-to-door salesmen**

Code enforcement officer Dawn Worley said Holyoke P.D. has received calls of salesmen going door to door in Holyoke.

Holyoke has a Green River ordinance in place that declares soliciting, hawking and peddling a nuisance.

Ordinance 5.16.010 reads, the practice of being in and upon private residences, public buildings and offices in the town by solicitors, peddlers, hawkers, itinerant merchants and transient vendors of goods, wares, merchandise, books, pictures and periodicals, not having been requested or invited to do so by the owner or owners, occupant or occupants of said private residences, public buildings or offices, for the purpose of soliciting orders for the sale of goods, wares and merchandise, or books, pictures or periodicals, or for the purpose of disposing of or peddling or hawking the same, is declared to be a nuisance and unlawful and punishable as such nuisance as a misdemeanor.

Worley said there have been some issues with people in town going around selling things. She wants to remind everyone to contact Holyoke P.D. first if plans are to go door-to-door selling anything.

### **Holyoke P.D. concerned with parking**

Another issue Holyoke P.D. has run into is parking near the schools. They want to remind people the area in front of the Elementary School is not available for parking from 8-8:30 a.m. and from 3-3:30 p.m. on school days. The area is reserved for school buses to unload and load students.

The area just south of the intersection of Phelan Ave. and Kellogg St. is a fire lane and no parking is allowed at any time.

Also, the area on the north side of Hale St. in front of the High school is posted no parking from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on school days. Parking in the posted area also disrupts school buses as they come to pick up students.

Holyoke P.D. said they have had issues in both areas with parking violations for people who “just went in for a minute.”

Anyone with questions regarding any of these issues are welcome to contact Holyoke P.D.

Those interested in seeing a code discussed or explored in future CCC articles should contact the Enterprise office at 854-2811.