

Scam artists have found a new tool in their bag of tricks – your computer. Now they can contact you anytime – day or night – with their false promises and tricks. This brochure outlines some of the tricks which have been used.

Public Utilities Commission

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Website: www.state.sd.us/puc/

*South Dakota
Public Utilities Commission*

INTERNET SCAMS



Dot cons



Website: www.state.sd.us/puc/

International Modem Dialing

The Offer: Get free access to games, , contests, music or adult sites by downloading a viewer or dialer computer program.

The Trick: The program disconnects the modem and reconnects through an international long distance number. As a result, consumers get huge telephone bills.

Tip: Don't download any program to access free service without reading all disclosures carefully. Check your phone bill every month for unusual charges.

Web Cramming

The Offer: Get a free custom-designed website for a 30-day trial period.

The Trick: Charges appear on phone bills even if the offer was declined or the trial period expired.

Tip: Review your phone bill and challenge any unauthorized charges. South Dakota has laws against such activity.

Credit Card Fraud

The Offer: View free online adult images or enter contests just for giving your credit card number to prove that you are over 18.

The Trick: The credit card number is used to run up charges.

Tip: Don't give your credit card number as proof of age. Dispute any unauthorized charges on your credit card billing.

Multilevel Marketing Plans

The Offer: Make money by recruiting people to sell products or services through their website.

The Trick: Some multilevel marketing programs are illegal pyramid schemes.

Tip: Avoid plans that require you to recruit distributors, buy expensive inventory or commit to a minimum sales volume.

Internet Access Services

The Offer: Free money, just cash the check.

The Trick: Consumers have been trapped into long term contracts for Internet access or other website services, with penalties for early cancellation.

Tip: Read both sides of the check and look at other material included with the check before signing. If you have already signed and returned the check, check your phone bill for unauthorized charges.

Internet Auctions

The Offer: Shop in a virtual marketplace that offers a huge selection of products with great deals

The Trick: After sending money, consumer have gotten poor quality products or nothing at all.

Tip: Check out the seller before bidding.