



Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

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### **DEC Issues Warning on Fraudulent Food Establishment Inspectors**

(JUNEAU, AK) – The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation Food Safety and Sanitation Program is issuing a warning to food establishment owners and operators advising them to be wary of callers misrepresenting themselves as DEC food inspectors.

The caller will ask to schedule an inspection at the establishment and will relay instructions to pay for the inspection. DEC does not charge for inspections or ask for confidential information over the phone to schedule inspections. Any enforcement actions are administered during the inspection or in writing following an inspection. Officials conducting restaurant inspections will have proper photo identification and credentials from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation. Food Service owners and operators are advised not to provide sensitive or confidential information over the telephone and to immediately report suspicious or fraudulent calls to local law enforcement officials. Owners and operators may also contact the Food Safety and Sanitation Program office at 907-269-7501 to confirm the identity of the inspector.

“This is not the first time scam artists have targeted establishments in the state of Alaska and made requests posing as a health inspector,” said DEC Environmental Health Director Kristin Ryan. “We continue to encourage establishments to be cautious of callers claiming to be state officials.”

The act of impersonating a public servant in the state of Alaska is a violation of Alaska statutes 11.56.830 and 11.46.570 and is punishable under Alaska law.

The scam is not unique to Alaska, as restaurants and food establishments across the country have received similar calls.

For more on DEC's Food Safety and Sanitation Program, visit:  
<http://dec.alaska.gov/eh/fss/index.htm>