



WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT UNWANTED COMMUNICATIONS

Unwanted communication can take the form of phone calls, text messages, mail, gifts, or online correspondence. Below are some tips for identifying, managing, and reporting unwanted phone calls

Handling Threatening Calls

If you receive a call threatening your safety or the safety of those around you:

- Gather information about the threat from the caller. Try to record characteristics listed at right.**
- Contact VTPD or local law enforcement immediately
- Document all information about the call

Tips on Handling Harassing and Obscene Phone Calls

The call recipient often knows the person who places a harassing or obscene call. If possible, the person answering the phone should remain calm, as to discourage more calls, and take the following steps:

- Hang up**
- Document all information about the call
- Save all voicemails left by the caller
- Contact VTPD immediately

Tips on Handling Unwanted Solicitations

Since phone calls can offer a certain amount of anonymity, be aware of possible scams.

- Do not provide any personal information over the phone to someone you do not know
- Ask for the caller's name and the organization they are representing. You can contact the Better Business Bureau for more information about them.
- Inform the caller you want to be placed on the "do not call" list
- Hang up** if you are uncomfortable with the content

Importance of Recording Incidents

- Help you remember details
- Draw attention to any potential patterns
- Justify potential need for a protective order
- Preserve your options for possible criminal prosecution

During any unwanted phone call, take note of the following to help you identify the caller:

Voice Characteristics

- Calm
- Nasal
- Deep
- Angry
- Raspy
- Stutter
- Excited
- Slurred
- Accent
- Quiet
- Familiar

Language Characteristics

- Well spoken
- Irrational
- Incoherent
- Taped
- Juvenile

Background Sounds

- Street Noise
- Music
- Other Voices
- Animal Noises
- Static

Notes:

- The information you record could potentially be used as evidence in court proceedings, so ensure your notes are accurate and complete.
- Save all text messages, emails, gifts, etc. that you receive in case they are needed for evidence

