



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

## Middlesex Sheriff's Office

Peter J. Koutoujian  
Sheriff

400 Mystic Avenue  
Medford, Massachusetts 02155

Phone (781) 960 2800  
Fax (781) 960 2902

**For Immediate Release**  
April 28, 2015

**For more information:**  
Kevin Maccioli  
Public Information Officer  
781-960-2805

### **Middlesex Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian visits Billerica Council on Aging for scam awareness presentation**

BILLERICA - Middlesex Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian visited the Billerica Council on Aging Tuesday, April 28, to discuss scam and fraud prevention.

"I want to thank the Council on Aging for having us in and giving us the opportunity to provide local seniors with information about ongoing scams," said Sheriff Koutoujian. "Information, we know, is the most powerful tool residents have to protect themselves from scammers."

Approximately 20 Billerica residents attended the 45 minute presentation where Sheriff Koutoujian discussed a variety of ongoing scams and ways citizens can protect themselves. Billerica Police Chief Daniel Rosa and Deputy Police Chief Roy Frost also addressed those in attendance.

Already this year, the Middlesex Sheriff's Office and Billerica Police Department have received calls of numerous scams targeting local residents. This past weekend, Billerica Police posted information on their website (<http://goo.gl/KA01Fp>) about some of the most common scams being reporting in the area.

One of the fastest growing types of scams being reported to authorities in Massachusetts is the so-called arrest scam in which perpetrators pose as government or law enforcement officials. In many of the scams reported to the Middlesex Sheriff's Office over the last year, individuals are receiving calls from people claiming to be IRS agents or deputy sheriffs and are being threatened with arrest unless they immediately pay a fictitious debt.

"No legitimate deputy or police officer will ever threaten arrest over the phone," said Sheriff Koutoujian. "Nor will they demand payment for debt over the phone."

A common theme in many of these arrest scams is the demand that the supposed debt be paid by purchasing a MoneyPak or GreenDot card from a local store. The perpetrators will then have the victim load the card with a specific amount of money and have the victim read the numbers of the back of the card to them over the phone. The money is then debited from the card by the suspects.

“Receiving a call from someone claiming to be a member of law enforcement and demanding money can be a jarring experience. That is what these scammers are counting on,” said Sheriff Koutoujian. “These scammers are counting on people being so frightened they pay immediately. Often, however, by asking questions and calling the main line of your local police department or sheriff’s office and speaking with an officer or deputy, residents can protect themselves and their hard-earned money.”

Residents with questions about current scams can contact the Middlesex Sheriff’s Office Community Affairs Office at 978-932-3251. Billerica seniors with questions or concerns about possible scams can also contact Billerica Police Patrolman Ivonne Osgood ([iosgood@billericapolice.org](mailto:iosgood@billericapolice.org)), the department’s elder affairs liaison.

###