

Help available to avoid telemarketers

Dear Attorney General Kline:
My family and I just moved to Kansas and I'm told there is a law on the books that regulates calls from telemarketers. Can you explain how this works?



Phill Kline
• Consumer Corner

Dear Kansas Consumer:
First of all, welcome to Kansas! I sincerely hope you and your family will enjoy living in the Sunflower State!

Second, you can avoid most telemarketing calls by making sure your home phone numbers are on the No-Call list. You can register for both the Kansas No-Call list and the Federal Do Not Call Registry by simply picking up the telephone you want to have registered and calling 1-888-382-1222.

You can also register over the internet by logging onto www.donotcall.gov. Once this Web site has been loaded click on the "Register A Phone Number" link and enter your phone number with area code, as well as a valid email address. Once this is completed the Federal Do Not Call Registry will email you a confirmation. Please follow the directions contained within that email to confirm your do not call status.

A telephone number needs to be registered on the no-call list each time it is changed or disconnected regardless of whether the resident

moves or not. Kansans have certainly responded to the opportunity to place their numbers on the list because a total of 1,361,034 numbers are now on the No-Call list. Nearly 37,000 of those were registered since the end of March.

Once registered, each telemarketer is given a thirty day grace period to download the newly registered numbers. If you receive a telemarketing call after those thirty days then please call my Consumer Information Line and file a complaint with my Consumer Protection Division. To file a complaint with our office you need to obtain as much information as you can about the telemarketer.

Ask for the telemarketer's name, on whose behalf the call is being made, the type of product or service they are selling and try to get a phone number and address if you can. With this information the Kansas No-Call Task Force can vigorously enforce the Kansas No-Call

Act against non-compliant organizations. Since January 2003, we have teamed with Kansans from every corner of our state to file 69 enforcement actions resulting in fines of \$355,000. In three of those instances the telemarketers left us no option short of litigation, and those three cases resulted in awards for the State exceeding \$250,000.

It is important to realize that not every call is a violation of the Kansas No-Call Act. Even if your telephone number is registered and appears on the No-Call list that call may not be a violation of the Act because it fits into one of the No-Call exemptions. For instance, the law allows a company to call you if you expressly request it. Keep this in mind when you are asked to fill out information at fairs, conferences, or other public events. Also, if you have an established business relationship with a company within the proceeding three years, that company is permitted to contact

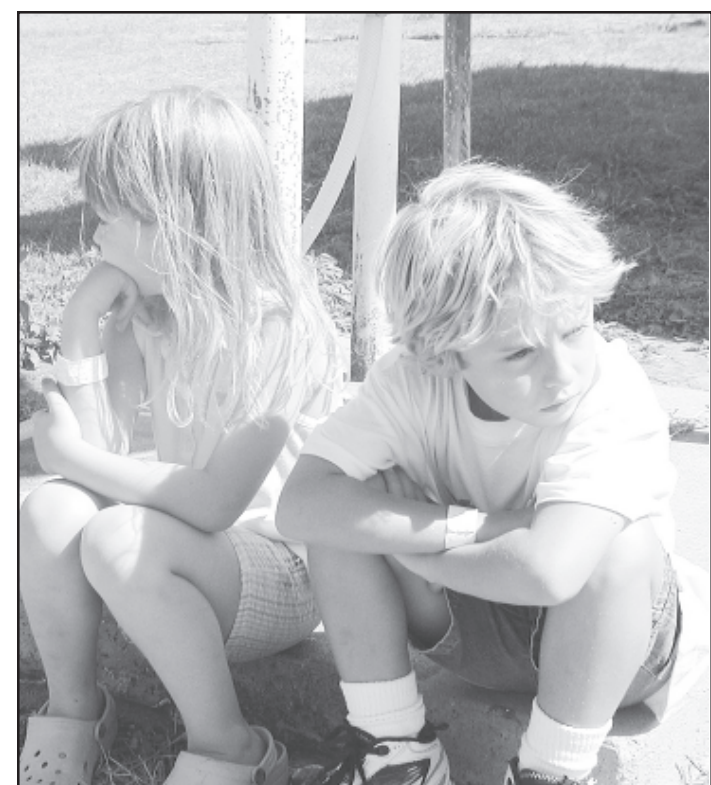
you. You do, however, enjoy the right under federal law to direct a company to stop making consumer telephone calls to your home.

The Kansas No-Call Act is aimed at persons or businesses who are trying to sell you something. Organizations that are soliciting charitable donations, calls from debt collectors, media outlets making survey calls, and calls designed to advance our democratic processes are calls exempted from the No Call Act.

Finally, if you would like to learn more about the Kansas No Call Act then call my Consumer Information Line at (785) 296-2424. (Or call my Consumer Protection Division at 800-432-2310 and ask to be transferred into the Consumer Information Line.) The Kansas No Call Task Force created two recordings about the Kansas No Call law on this helpful line. Enter category 5, message 5 for the general overview, and category 6, message 5 for citations to the Kansas statutes setting forth the law.

Attorney General Phill Kline offers this public service to help you avoid becoming a victim of consumer fraud. For further information please write Attorney General Phill Kline, Consumer Protection Division, 120 SW 10th Ave., Topeka, KS 66612, or call 1-800-432-2310.

Young fans



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Cousins Madison Saddler, left, of Colorado, and Braden Leitner of Atwood enjoyed the sights and sounds of the Pickin' on the Plains bluegrass festival Saturday at the Thomas County Fairgrounds.

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