



SCAM
ALERT

UNREQUESTED PRODUCT SCAMS

Due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, many people are relying more on online shopping sites, and scam predators are adapting to this change. Scam predators are now using a new scam known as “brushing” to obtain your personal information and possibly set up or hijack accounts in your name with online retailers. This scam typically occurs when you receive a product in the mail that you did not order. The scam predator may set up an account in your name when they send you the product, give themselves a good review in your name and gain access to your personal information by impersonating you.

Another variation of this scam occurs when you order a specific product and receive something different, perhaps seeds or something of no value to you. Be wary of any items that you did not order that could be dangerous to you, your pets or the environment.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the Better Business Bureau are advising the following actions to stay safe and avoid these types of scams:

- **Dispute** all charges with the payment service, such as Pay Pal, Venmo, bank or credit card company, for any items you did not order, are different than what you ordered and for items you never received
- **Dispose** of potentially dangerous unordered products, especially food items, cleaning or hygiene products, medications, pet food or seeds
- **Do not** be fooled by scam predators into paying for the unordered product or for postage to return the item
- **Remember** you do not ever have to return or pay for unordered merchandise
- **Check** your online accounts regularly and make certain the products you order match those that you received
- **Always** keep yourself and your personal information safe

Note: You may report scam predators to the FTC, Adult Protective Services (APS) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation Internet Crime Complaint Center.

If you think you may be a victim of a scam, contact
San Bernardino County APS at 1 (877) 565-2020
or your local police department.