

CONSUMER AFFAIRS OFFICE

Township of Livingston

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AVOIDING UNWANTED TELEPHONE CALLS

Notwithstanding one's entry on the Federal and State Do Not Call Registries, many people still receive those annoying, unsolicited, telemarketing calls. The FTC gets over 3,000,000 complaints a year!

There are several things one can do to reduce the incidents of these calls:

1. Register your home, cell and business numbers with the Federal Trade Commission, and be sure to re-register these numbers that were originally registered more than 5 years ago. You can call 1-888-382-1222 or go to www.dontcall.gov
2. Check your caller ID, as telemarketers are required to display their numbers and, if available, the company soliciting you. Be wary if the number is marked "private" or "unknown", or if the marketer refuses to provide a call-back number.
3. Cell phones may also be registered and it is myth that telemarketers may soon be able to call them without restriction.
4. While facsimile numbers are not yet protected, I have added mine to my registry. Facsimile telemarketers are required to provide a number to call to kill future solicitations. I still get facsimile solicitations, even though I have called!
5. One can register any number of phone numbers, but they only allow 3 at a time. Just make multiple registrations.
6. When you register or re-register, you will be asked for an e-mail address, so your registration can be confirmed. Shortly after registering, you will receive an e-mail confirmation with a link to confirm the registration. You must respond within 72 hours of receiving the e-mail or your registration will not be effective.
7. If you have been registered over 31 days, and continue getting calls, file a complaint with the FTC. Same web site as above, just click on "File a Complaint", and for NJ go to the State Office of Consumer Affairs: <http://njintouch.state.nj.us/lps/ca/home.htm>, and click on Do Not Call Information, then "File a Complaint Against Telemarketers". Please do not call the Livingston Office of Consumer Affairs, as we do not handle these types of complaints.

You may still receive calls from individuals if they're calling on behalf of charities, political organizations or pollsters, but you may ask that you not be solicited again.

Following these suggestions should result in more pleasurable telephone usage.