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### MEDIA ALERT

#### **Utah Division of Consumer Protection warns of new Wal-Mart gift card scam**

*"Dugway mom says her teenager was target of call, scam artist asked for account information"*

**(For immediate release...)**

**SALT LAKE CITY, Utah** - Francine A. Giani, Executive Director of the Utah Department of Commerce, announced today that the Division of Consumer Protection is warning Utah consumers about a scam involving Wal-Mart gift cards. Residents have reported receiving phone calls from operators claiming that the recipient is the random winner of a \$400 Wal-Mart gift card but they need to give their credit card or debit card company name along with their account information to cover the \$1.95 shipping fee.

In one case, a Dugway woman reports the caller asked for her teenage daughter who doesn't own a credit or debit card so she felt they were "trolling" her household for information. What set this scam apart from earlier versions was that the operator gave the real Wal-Mart gift card customer service phone number to the consumer to try to validate their pitch. Division investigators found the scam artist was calling from a pre-paid cell phone that couldn't be called back so if the consumer didn't go along with their offer, they would move on to the next person.

"Scam artists continue to try to trick us into giving up our personal account information for an alleged free prize or gift card," said Francine A. Giani, Executive Director of the Utah Department of Commerce, "What is especially disturbing about this case is a teenager was the target so these scammers are now trying to steal our kids' bank account information as well. We commend this Utah consumer for doing the right thing and hanging up on this fraudster."

Consumers are reminded not to give out personal account information, SSN numbers or other identifying information to strangers. Also, the Division is recommending that consumers not send any money through a wire transfer

service unless the recipient is a trusted and known source. For more information log on to: [www.consumerprotection.utah.gov](http://www.consumerprotection.utah.gov)

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