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Some people enjoy receiving telephone solicitations at home. They find telemarketing to be informative and convenient. Others find the calls to be annoying and feel harassed by telemarketers. Consumers now have more choices in how to handle telemarketing calls to their homes. While some consumers prefer to remain on telemarketer's lists, the amended rule created by the National Do Not Call Registry make it easier for consumers to stop getting unwanted sales calls.

This article provides information about the options available to consumers regarding the federal and state do not call lists and related scams.

### National Do Not Call Registry

Many of you have followed the Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) efforts to enforce the



National Do Not Call Registry. On October 7, 2003, the U.S. 10th Circuit Court of Appeals granted the FTC the right to initiate and enforce the registry. The National Do Not Call Registry is managed by the FTC, the nation's consumer protection agency. It is enforced by the FTC, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), and state law enforcement officials. Created as a free service, the registry offers consumers a choice regarding telemarketing calls and a process for limiting unwanted calls. For detailed information in English or Spanish, including press releases, public service announcements, and logos, visit <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/edcams/donotcall/index.html>. This site also contains the entire record of the FTC's amended

Telemarketing Sales Rule (TSR). In addition to creating the National Do Not Call Registry, the amended TSR restricts unauthorized billing to your credit card account, reduces abandoned calls ("dead air" or hang-up calls) from telemarketers, and will require telemarketers to include identification on caller-ID services.

Currently, Wyoming is one of several states that maintains a state-specific do not call list and does not transfer the list to the FTC national registry. If you already registered on Wyoming's do not call list but want to be included on both lists, you also must register on the National Do Not Call Registry. More information about Wyoming's do not call registry is included in this article.

The National Do Not Call Registry allows you to register both home and mobile phone numbers. If you have not already registered, you may do so in one of two ways:

- *Register online at [www.donotcall.gov](http://www.donotcall.gov).* This option requires an active e-mail address because FTC will send you an e-mail as part of the registration process. You can register up to three telephone numbers at one time. If you have more than three personal telephone numbers, you can go through the online registration process more than once. You will receive a verification of your registration online.
- *Register by telephone by calling the registry's toll-free number 1-888-382-1222 (TTY1-866-290-4236).* This option requires that you call from the phone you wish to register. You will not receive a confirmation, but you can verify that your number is on the registry by checking online at the above Web site address or by calling the registry's toll-free number.

Once registered, your phone number is available for most telemarketers to remove from their lists by the next day although they have up to three months from the date you registered to stop calling you. Your telephone number remains on the do not call list for five years, at which time you may register again.

Telemarketers who disregard the registry may face injunctions and may be fined up to \$11,000 per call. After you have been registered for three months, you can file complaints of telemarketer violations with the FTC at the registry's toll-free number or online.

### **Wyoming Do Not Call List**

The following information is from the Wyoming Attorney General's Consumer Protection Unit Web site at <http://attorneygeneral.state.wy.us/consumer.htm>.

The State of Wyoming Attorney General's Office enforces the Wyoming "no-call" law as follows:

- Most telemarketers must refrain from calling residential and wireless telephone numbers and pager numbers that have been registered in the Direct Marketing Association's (DMA) Telephone Preference Service (TPS).
- Telemarketers must disclose the purpose of a call and identify the business they represent.

To register your telephone number, contact the DMA and request that your number be included on the TPS list. You can do this in one of three ways:

- Complete a form from the Wyoming Attorney General's Consumer Protection Unit at <http://attorneygeneral.state.wy.us/consumer.htm> and mail it to the DMA at the address given on the form. There is no charge for this.
- Submit a request online at the DMA's Web site at [www.the-dma.org/consumers/](http://www.the-dma.org/consumers/) (go to the consumer assistance page). There is a \$5 fee payable by credit card for this.
- Mail a request with your name, home address, telephone number, and signature requesting to opt-out of the Direct Marketing Association's telemarketers' list. There is no charge. Mail the letter to:  
Telephone Preference Service

Attn: Dept 11813482  
Direct Marketing Association  
P. O. Box 282  
Carmel, NY 10512

The Wyoming Attorney General's Office enforces the "no-call" law. Telemarketers must update their TPS lists at least quarterly, so you may expect a decrease in the number of telemarketing solicitations within three months. Your telephone number remains on the DMA do not call list for five years. If you have enrolled your number on the TPS list at least 60 days prior to receiving a call from a telemarketer, you can file a complaint with the Wyoming Attorney General. To file a complaint, download the Telephone Solicitation Complaint Form found on the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Unit site, complete it, and return it to the Wyoming Attorney General's Office, Consumer Protection Unit, 123 Capitol Building, Cheyenne, WY 82002.

### **Exemptions from the National Do Not Call Registry**

You may continue to receive some calls from telemarketers once you have registered on either or both of the state and national registries. You can still be contacted by:

- Charities
- Survey researchers
- Political campaigns
- Companies with which you have an existing business relationship and their affiliates, which can contact you for 18 months after you have registered
- Companies you have inquired about or applied for a service or products from, which can contact you within three months
- Companies to which you have given written consent to remain on their calling list

If you do not want to register with the National and/or Wyoming Do Not Call Registry, you can still ask individual telemarketers, company by company, to put you on their do not call list. A company is subject to a harsh fine if it does not honor your request.

### **Do Not Call Scams**

The FTC is warning consumers to be cautious about do not call scams. The FTC does not allow private companies or third parties to "pre-register" consumers for the National Do Not Call Registry. Web site or phone solicitations requesting personal information to register your name or phone number on a do not call list or to confirm that you are already registered are a scam. Once a person has registered, there is no need to confirm personal information. Con artists usually identify themselves as "phone registry officials," the FTC, or an organization "to stop fraud." The government will not call consumers to put them on a registry. If you get such a call, hang up immediately or, if possible, write down the caller's organization or phone number. Report the contact to the FTC at [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov) or 1-877-FTC-HELP or to the Wyoming Attorney General's Office at 307-777-7841.

Sources:

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