



Shanghai Consulate News for Americans

Issue 70

November 2013

Expats Urged To Be Alert As Telecom Scams Rise

Temporary After-Hour Emergency Numbers

Due to the ongoing expansion of our facilities, the regular emergency phone number for the U.S. Consulate in Shanghai will not be available from 5:00 p.m. Friday, November 29, 2013 until 8:00 a.m. Monday, December 2.

In case of emergencies during this time, please call 011-86-10-8531 4000 if you are calling from the United States or 010-8531 4000 if you are calling within China.

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(From the [website](#) of Shanghai Municipal Government, 11-18-2013)

Following a series of telecom-related scams which have also targeted expatriates, overseas Chinese and gold-collar workers, police are advising people to be alert while also launching a campaign against scammers.

Last week, two expatriates from the Pudong New Area were swindled out of 24 million yuan (US\$3.9 million). One of them lost more than 19.9 million yuan within a week, making it the largest scam case in Shanghai in recent years.

Swindlers previously targeted seniors or those with low education background who were easy prey. But off late, they have turned their attention to expats and Chinese returnees as most of them do not have a good understanding of the Chinese law.

Managers and company executives are also being marked out as they are usually confident about their judgment. They have their own circle and have been generally unaffected by scams till date.

In the recent case, the expatriate told the Pudong police that a swindler claiming to be a Shenzhen Telecom staff told her that a number registered in her name had logged up a huge bill for making international calls. Next, she got a call from a man claiming to be from Guangzhou police, who told her a bank account that was registered in her name was involved in illegal money transfers. She followed

the “policeman’s” advise and transferred 19.9 million yuan into a “safe account.”

Fake numbers

With the help of software, swindlers can decide what numbers to show to the person they are making the call to. Police have warned that people should be alert when receiving calls and short messages from numbers that start from 400 — usually used by big companies and banks and other social service departments.

The frauds include winning lotteries, un-specific transfer requests, unsecured loans, credit card overdrafts and extremely low price on products.

Police tips

Do not give away bank accounts and passwords easily. No matter how good their story sounds, swindlers will inevitably ask for bank card information. There are no such things as “safe accounts” and one should not transfer money into accounts provided by others. Public security bureau officials, if they need information, will do so face-to-face, instead of asking for accounts and passwords on the phone.

Telecom companies, commercial banks and social security system have separate working platforms. Be careful when a swindler claims he can help you contact police or asks you to transfer money into “safe accounts.”

Telecom companies send letters or reminders for delayed payments instead of making phone calls.

Travel Warnings and Alerts

Security reminder: It is advisable that you and your family review your personal security profile and be aware of your surroundings at all times.

Since our previous Newsletter, the U.S. Department of State has issued new **Travel Warnings** for the following countries:

North Korea	11/19/2013
Eritrea	11/18/2013
Central African Republic	11/14/2013
Egypt	11/06/2013
Congo-Kinshasa	10/24/2013

Travel Warnings are issued to describe long-term, protracted conditions that make a country dangerous or unstable. A Travel Warning is also issued when the

U.S. Government's ability to assist American citizens is constrained due to the closure of an embassy or consulate or because of a drawdown of its staff. This information is available at http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html.

Since our previous Newsletter, the U.S. Department of State has issued new **Travel Alerts**:

Mozambique	11/08/2013
Nepal	11/01/2013

Travel Alerts are issued to disseminate information about short-term conditions generally within a particular country or region that pose imminent risks to the security of U.S. citizens. Natural

disasters, terrorist attacks, coups, anniversaries of terrorist events, election-related demonstrations or violence, and high-profile events such as international conferences or regional sports events are examples of conditions that might generate a Travel Alert. This information is available at

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/pa/pa_1766.html.

The most up-to-date information regarding permitted and **prohibited items** on flights can be viewed online at www.tsa.gov.

For additional information, please visit "**Americans Traveling Abroad**" on the website of the U.S. Department of State http://travel.state.gov/visa/americans/americans_1252.html.

Upcoming Holidays & Other Closures

A full list of all of our closures is online at <http://shanghai.usembassy-china.org.cn/service.html>. The ACS Unit will be **CLOSED** to the public on:

<u>November 28, 2013, Thursday</u>	Thanksgiving Day	感恩节	Gǎn'ēn Jié
<u>November 29, 2013, Friday</u>	Administrative Closure	行政管理日	Xíngzhèng Guǎnlǐ Rì
<u>December 25, 2013, Wednesday</u>	Christmas Day	圣诞节	Shèngdàn Jié
<u>December 30, 2013, Monday</u>	Administrative Closure	行政管理日	Xíngzhèng Guǎnlǐ Rì

American Citizen Services (ACS) Contact Information

U.S. Consulate General, Shanghai, China, 1038 West Nanjing Road, 8/F
Westgate Mall 梅龙镇广场 (Méi Lóng Zhèn Guǎng Chǎng)

To Make Or Cancel An Appointment:

<https://evisaforms.state.gov/acs/default.asp?postcode=SHG&appcode=1>

Mon - Fri *Closed on Wednesday afternoons, weekends, and holidays.

After Hours Emergencies: (86-21) 3217-4650

Homepage: shanghai.usembassy-china.org.cn/service.html