



# Humboldt County Sheriff's Office

826 Fourth Street, Eureka, CA 95501

**Date:** 12-21-2011

**From:** Lt. Steve Knight  
(707) 268-3606

**Subject:** Attempted Fraud/Extortion

**Case:** 201106767

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

On 12-20-2011, approximately 8:00 p.m. the Humboldt County Sheriff's Office was contacted by a citizen regarding an attempted theft/ extortion by fraud. The Cutten area resident reported receiving a phone call from a man identifying himself as " Mike Bishop". The caller told the victim he was a " Repo Agent ", and threatened to repossess the victims car if they failed to send him money. When the citizen asked the suspect to identify which vehicle he was going to repossess, and asked the caller more questions the caller got angry with the citizen and rude. The victim hung up on the suspect who called three more times demanding money., and only quit calling after the victim told the caller she was notifying law enforcement. The victim told the Sheriff Deputy investigating the crime that she had not had a vehicle payment in twenty years. The phone number listed on the victim's phone was 707-385-9251 and her caller I.D. listed the caller location as Healdsburg. The victim tried calling the number and received a message that stated they reached a "Pinger Number".

On 12-20-2011, approximately 9:00 p.m. the Sheriffs Office received a similar complaint from a Humboldt Hill Resident. The suspect threatened to Repo the victim's vehicle unless money was sent, however could not describe the vehicle, or give information on the agency he worked for or any other relevant information. At one point during the conversation the suspect threatened to assault the victim unless money was sent. The call originated from the same number as the first complaint.

The investigating deputy learned a "Pinger number " is a free service where you can download applications for your I-Phone and Android based cell phones. It allows you to obtain a free anonymous phone number to text and make calls from your computer.

The Sheriffs Office would like to remind the public to ask questions of callers, and not take callers claims at face value. Do not give out your personal information over the telephone.

Mike Downey  
Sheriff

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