



**For Immediate Release**  
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## NEWS RELEASE

### Imposter Health Inspector Reported

#### **County warns restaurant operators to check identification of health inspectors**

**San Rafael, CA** – Marin County Environmental Health Services (EHS) is alerting restaurant operators and others in the food facility industry about fraudulent activity involving an individual or individuals contacting food establishments claiming to be a health inspector. Ethnic facilities (examples are Thai, Japanese, and Chinese) have been targeted. On more than one occasion the caller has been described having an East Indian accent.

EHS has received complaints that an individual using various names is contacting local food businesses by phone posing as a “health inspector” and stating an inspection is scheduled, usually the next day. The operator is then given a phone number to call to verify the inspection, and in some cases a “confirmation number” is also given. However, there is no such inspection and the inspector imposter never arrives.

Health Department officials said the scam involves obtaining personal information from business owners over the phone that will be used as part of a larger fraud to set up bogus accounts with online auctions.

Food facility health inspections are generally unannounced and conducted by trained and certified Registered Environmental Health Specialists. Inspectors do not collect money at food establishments and do not sell or endorse specific products. State law also requires inspectors to carry official photo identification. An owner or employee of the food establishment may refuse entry to an inspector who is unable to present official identification.

Know who your County Health Inspector is and don't give out personal information over the phone or online.

To report possible fraudulent activity or ask about other issues related to health inspections, contact Dave Smail, Supervising R.E.H.S. at EHS number (415) 499-6916.