

## Drake: Show phone scammers you're not gonna take it

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Seventy-one.

That's how many times my wife's phone rang during the last week.

The calls all had unfamiliar numbers and were made by different people, but they shared one thing: Every single person asked, "Is Jacob there?"

They were all annoying and the calls needed to be stopped.

We don't know who Jacob is, nor do we want to know anything about him, if he exists, which we doubt. This was obviously a phone scam, and my wife and I wanted to get to the bottom of it and make these nerve-wracking calls stop.

Many victims

I know many people in Wyoming are victims of these schemes so I decided to share our experience, even though Corryne hates it every time I write about her in a column.

I told her this is a public service to show people how to deal with this problem, and she bought it.

Two years ago my wife took the right step by registering her phone number with the Federal Trade Commission's "Do Not Call" list.

That ended a lot of calls from companies trying to sell us junk or services we don't need. But obviously it hadn't stopped this latest barrage.

She was polite to the first few callers, informing them Jacob doesn't live here and they had the wrong number.

As the calls escalated so did her decibel level whenever she decided to answer. Without embarrassing her, I think it's safe to tell you that she started using words not fit for the family hour.

Her tone didn't actually matter. She was pleasant but forceful with many of these people, asking them to take us off their call list.

Sometimes they hanged up the phone, but a few assured us we wouldn't be bothered again. Less than a half-hour later, someone else would call asking for Jacob.

Corryne came up with the idea to tell the next caller that Jacob had died and was already in the ground, so stop calling. I thought about how we might tearfully break the news about Jacob's demise:

"I'm sorry to tell you, but Jacob drowned in a vat filled with kitty litter. As you know, he didn't even have a cat, so it was a highly ironic death. There wasn't enough money for a proper funeral, so he's in our backyard. Would you like to donate to his burial fund?"

*"If you took those bills and stretched them, they'd go to the moon and back 17 times," said James Quiggle, director of communications for the Coalition Against Insurance Fraud.*



**Coalition Against  
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Ineffective  
Still get calls

The registry can't stop all obnoxious calls because it only covers sales. You still may get legal political, charitable, debt collection, informational and telephone survey calls.

If you've recently done business with a company, it may still call. But if you ask the business not to, it must honor your request.

The Coalition Against Insurance Fraud warns that in one of the newest scams, con artists – often targeting seniors – try to sell fake health insurance that they lie is "required" by health-care reform.

The pitchmen may say this is a "limited-time" deal or "limited open-enrollment" for signing up. Some use the term "Obamacare," and even lie that they're from the U.S. government.

I hope some of this information helps you get rid of phone scammers and keeps you from being conned.

Before I learned that the numbers are fake, I told Corryne about another potential solution:

Call each of the phone numbers she has collected and keep asking for Dagmar, over and over. Then call and say, "This is Dagmar. Any messages for me?"

OK, I know it's an old joke, but Corryne really didn't need to give me that "look" that tells me to

View the entire [article](#). View other [articles](#) quoting the Coalition Against Insurance Fraud.