

Scams to watch out for...

One of our goals here at the Arvada Police Department is to protect you and your hard-earned savings from criminals who will try anything they can to **swindle** you out of your money. Please take a few minutes to read the following information in reference to some of the more prevalent scams happening today.

You might receive a call or a letter advising you that you have won **millions** in a lottery that you never signed up for. All you need to do is wire some money and the alleged lottery officials will send you your winnings. **And**, if you act right away they will even throw in a **brand new car**. **This is a scam**. Most of these calls or letters come from Jamaica, Canada and sometimes even Europe. Watch for that on your caller ID or envelope. Foreign lotteries are illegal in this country. Of course the caller or the letter writer will tell you they are in Las Vegas, New York or Ft. Lauderdale.

Next, you might receive a call from Canada and a young person says, “**Grandpa or Grandma, guess who?**” If you respond with the name of one of your grandchildren they will automatically say “**that’s right**.” Then they will go on to tell you a very sad story of how they went to Canada and either got arrested for DUI or involved in a serious traffic accident. They will tell you not to mention this to mom and dad because they will be very upset. The caller will ask you to wire two or three thousand dollars to help them get out of jail and back to the states. **This is a scam**. **Call you kids** and they will confirm that your grandchild is fine and probably no where near Canada.

Another common scam happening lately. You may receive an actual check in the mail for somewhere between three and five thousand dollars with a letter advising you that you have won a lot of money. This check is to help cover the cost of processing fees, attorney fees, etc. All you need to do is call the number on the letter, collect your instructions, deposit the check into your bank account and immediately wire some or all of the check amount to the lottery officials. **This is a scam**. Even though the check looks legitimate it will bounce and you will have no recourse with the bank because **you signed** the back of the check. Everything you wired will be gone for good.

Another shameful scam has you meeting a very nice guy through an online dating service who advises he works in Nigeria and owns a construction company. He continues to write and call you. He eventually asks you to help him financially with his business so he can wrap things up and get back to the states to be with you. You wire him as much money as you can and then you never hear from him again. **This is a scam**. Even if he sends you a check to cover what you wired, it will bounce and you will have lost everything you wired him.

The list goes on and on and on. There are new scams popping up all the time. Don't be a victim and fall for these criminal tricks.

Here are some simple "red flags" to keep in mind and share with your friends:

1. **Uninitiated Contact:** The criminal contacted you; you did not ask to be contacted. If you don't provide personal information, they may not be able to defraud you! **Delete the email, hang up the phone or shred the letter.**
2. **The need for secrecy or confidentiality:** You are on a "**Winning List**" which hasn't even been released yet. This is a "**Chosen Few**" opportunity. No one can know – not your spouse, your family or your closest friend.
3. **The need for urgency:** The criminal will insist that you need to move on this right away! This offer is only good if you act now; Go down to your local WalMart, King Soopers or Safeway and wire money as soon as you hang up the phone.
4. **You must wire money:** The criminal will emphasize the fact that you need to send the wire right away. He or she will also advise you to tell the clerk that you are wiring money to a relative. They **never** want you to tell the clerk what you are really doing. Remember **this is a secret.**
5. And lastly, you actually know this final red flag: This quote came out of the Great Depression and is just as true today as it was then. **"If it sounds too good to be true... it probably is."**

Please remember, if you have to **send money to win money** it is definitely a scam. If you send money to these criminals **it is gone forever. We cannot get it back.**

Thank you for taking the time to read this information today. Please share this scam information and the scam hotline phone number with your friends and family. The hotline phone number is 720-898-6739. If you need more information please contact Officer Don Sikkema at 720-898-6724.