EUGENE POLICE NEWS RELEASE

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For further information, contact:
Melinda McLaughlin, APR, Public Information Director, at 541.682.5124
John Hankemeier, Public Information Coordinator, 541.682.5197

Beware of Scammer

Criminals are continually crafting new scams geared toward separating you from your savings, or reprising old scams. Financial and internet crimes are some of the fastest growing crime trends.

Eugene Police Financial Crimes Unit has seen a flurry of local activities with individuals or businesses who have been taken in by scams and the money sent overseas. This makes it hard to track and solve the crimes. Recently, there were two businesses with compromised bank accounts, likely due to checks stolen through the mail. There is also a scam that is costing banks around the country millions of dollars. Another is a smaller scam and an Illinois victim lost $2,000.

There are so many scams out there: grandchild scam, secret shopper scam, foreign lottery scam, Craig's list check scams, and more. A list of scams is provided on EPD's website (http://www.eugene-or.gov/DocumentCenter/View/11128). This document covers some of the most common scams we've seen in our area, but new ones are popping-up all the time.

Scammers tick you into handing over your cash, personal I.D., checking account numbers, and credit card information any way they can.

The Eugene Police Department would like to remind people to follow their instincts and never feel embarrassed about confirming the identity of a caller. This can be accomplished by contacting the represented agency directly via a published contact phone number and asking to speak with the individual directly or confirm the information with the agency's non-emergency phone number. EPD's non-emergency number is 541.682.5111. To report a scam, you can also call the EPD crime tip number at 541.682.8888.

These cases provide an opportunity for a reminder on how to avoid becoming the victim of fraud. Scams are cyclical in nature. With this particular scam, Eugene Police recommend to be careful and skeptical of callers:

- If someone asks you for your cash, credit card numbers or other personal information—especially if you don’t know them well—the safest move is to refuse their request and check with the police, or find an independent way to contact a legitimate business and follow up.
rather than responding right away to the caller.

- Don't give out personal or financial information to someone who calls you. If you are unsure, hang up and independently find the phone number of the alleged represented agency and call yourself. A law enforcement agency will not ask you for this type of information or request that money be sent by way of money order for any reason.
- Beware of high pressure techniques, such as the need to give information or make a decision on the spot.
- If it sounds quirky or weird, it probably is.

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