

# Protecting Your Money

## Don't Fall For Foreign Lottery Fraud

(NAPSA)—Each year, organized groups of criminals target and victimize thousands of Americans by telephone, e-mails and through the mail—but you can protect yourself and your family.

The United States Postal Inspection Service has documented over \$42 million in losses from this type of fraud. In some cases, people have lost their homes and their savings by chasing the dream of a big “lottery jackpot.”

Inspector Paul Krenn advises, “One of the main techniques scammers use is a foreign lottery scam, where they tell you to send money to pay for taxes or fees. If you’ve received a suspected fraud via mail or if the mail was used to continue a crime started online, over the phone or in person, report it to The U.S. Postal Inspection Service.”

### What To Watch Out For

Here are a few facts and signs to consider:

- Scammers are using new techniques, such as legitimate mailing lists and new technology. They “spoof” caller ID to make it look as if they’re calling from the U.S. or even a government agency.

- Older consumers, especially shut-ins, are often a favorite target for foreign lottery fraud. Look out for checks written or money wired internationally; a telephone that rings constantly; or a stack of



**Foreign lottery fraud, a criminal practice where scammers entice U.S. consumers to send money and even provide bank and credit card information, is a growing problem that can have devastating and long-lasting effects on victims and their families.**

lottery or sweepstakes entries.

- Scammers are constantly updating their methods. One of their latest tricks is to convince you that you’ve won a foreign lottery and all you need to do is wire a small processing fee (relative to the gigantic prize). Don’t—you’ll never see that money again.

- Beware of calls from foreign countries, especially if they’re calling an elderly person.

- If you or a loved one receives an unsolicited offer, hang up the phone or delete the e-mail.

- Don’t give out personal or financial information to anyone over the Internet or phone.

- Never wire or send money to anyone, anywhere, who says you have won a foreign lottery.

- Don’t let anyone pressure you into making an immediate decision.

- Never purchase anything until you get all information in writing.

### Where To Get Help

To help people recognize and prevent frauds and scams, The U.S. Postal Inspection Service set up a website, [www.deliveringtrust.com](http://www.deliveringtrust.com). At the site, you can educate yourself, share the information with family and friends, and report suspected fraud sent through the U.S. mail.