

The Active Consumer

Identity Theft Ranks First In Consumer Fraud

(NAPSA)—When actor Will Smith played Agent J in the movie *Men In Black*, that was show business. But, when Carlos Lomax impersonated actor Will Smith, that was identity theft.



Experts say the emotional costs of identity theft can be as serious as the financial ones.

Postal Inspectors arrested Lomax for stealing the actor's identity. Lomax was sentenced to jail and ordered to pay restitution.

"Identity theft is the number one consumer fraud in the nation," says Chief Postal Inspector Lee R. Heath. The crime is so serious that the U.S. Postal Service has launched a consumer protection campaign to educate the public.

Said Heath, "Victims run the gamut of society. They're wealthy, they're poor, they're old, they're young. Be smart, protect your personal information."

The experts at the U.S. Postal Inspector Service recommend that consumers inform the authorities if they find their name is being used illegally to obtain credit cards or merchandise by mail.

To learn more, visit www.usps.com/postalinspectors.