



Crime Watch

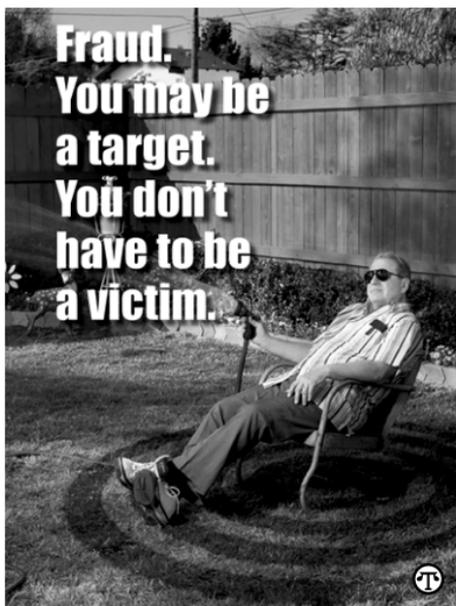
The Fight Against Fraud Knows No Border

(NAPSA)—Canada and the United States share similar cultures, enthusiasm for sports and a common border.

Unfortunately, the border is proving to be no barrier to fraud schemes that target victims in both countries. Armed with the Internet and cell phones, con artists target victims—many of them older Americans—in these cross-border schemes. Using false names and electronic tricks, they hide who and where they really are.

The good news is that the U.S. Postal Inspection Service is working with Canadian law enforcement to stop these crimes. Prevention, however, is still the best medicine. Chief Postal Inspector L.R. Heath encourages consumers to protect themselves by following these tips:

- Be wary of anything that promises large sums of money, such as sweepstakes or lottery winnings, in exchange for your advance payment, donation or investment.
- Don't be pressured into making a decision about an offer. Check it out first.
- Be cautious about businesses that try to conceal their mailing addresses and phone numbers, and evade questions about their operations.
- Be aware that if you respond to even one of these "offers," your name will be added to a "mooch" list by these criminals. These are contact lists, similar to those used by legitimate businesses, that track people who have fallen for scams in the past. They are bought and sold by these criminal enterprises and you can count on being targeted again.



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The Postal Service's Consumer Advocate Delores J. Killete said, "Older Americans need to be educated to avoid becoming victims of consumer fraud and convinced that it's okay to say 'no' to solicitations. But their children, many of whom are baby boomers, also need to play a role. They need to keep an eye on elderly parents and grandparents to protect them from scammers. Fighting fraud truly is a family matter." Educated families are the best defense against these fraudsters—if they recognize the warning signs.

To learn more about fraud and to order "Nowhere to Run," a free DVD on cross-border fraud prevention, visit the Web site at www.usps.com/postalinspectors or call toll-free, (877) 987-3728.