

March is Fraud Prevention Month

OPP and the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre partners are launching their annual Fraud Prevention Month public awareness campaign. Every year, thousands of Canadians fall victim to fraud, amassing losses in the millions of dollars. Regardless of age, gender and location, everyone can take basic steps to better protect themselves from becoming victims of fraud. Some basic tips include never giving out personal information at your door, over the phone, through social media or on dating websites.

During March, OPP and its partners ? the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and the Competition Bureau of Canada ? will join police services across the country to promote public awareness to help prevent all Canadians from becoming victims of fraud. This year's OPP Fraud Prevention Month media campaign will focus on five topics: Emergency/Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) scams; romance scam; microsoft and computer scams; phishing and bank web site scams; and lottery scams.

OPP will be posting tips and links to various resources online. The public is encouraged to engage in the conversation to help them recognize, reject and report fraud on social media by using the hashtags #FPM2016 #DontBeAVictim and #OPPtips.

If you or someone you know suspect they've been a victim of fraud, contact your local police service, the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre, Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS), or online at www.tipsubmit.com/start.htm

?Whether it is vulnerable citizens cheated out of their life savings or young people stripped of their assets and forced to start over, the harm caused by all types of fraud is staggering,? observed OPP?Commissioner Vince Hawkes. ?The money taken is used to fuel other illegal activities, causing further harm to society as a whole.?

?Fraud Prevention Month helps raise awareness about online and other frauds to keep people safe,? Community Safety and Correctional Services Minister Yasir Naqvi said. ?Frauds can have a devastating impact on its victims. They can strike anyone, but vulnerable Ontarians face an even greater risk.?

?I am pleased to join the OPP and other police services working together to raise awareness, educate our citizens and prevent victimization,? Naqvi added. ?They have valuable online resources in place and I encourage all Ontarians to learn the steps they can take to protect them and their loved ones from fraud to keep our communities safe.?