

More reports of scams circulating through Caledon

Caledon OPP would like to remind all residents to be mindful of any potential frauds through such means as telephone calls, emails, registered mail, and/or by solicitors knocking at their doors.

Since the beginning of 2016, police officers have responded to a number of complaints pertaining to mail and telephone scams. Many Canadians find themselves becoming scam victims thanks to the excitement of a surprise win or to claim a prize from a fake lottery, sweepstake, inheritance or contest.

Remember phone calls, letters, emails, text messages and pop-up messages appearing on your electronic devices may make claims that state the offer is legal and that there are relatively minor costs to claim a large sum of money. But by responding, you may lose everything you send to a scammer and, if you have provided other personal details, your identity information could be stolen to support other crimes.

OPP urged residents to confirm who they're dealing with before sending any money anywhere, for any reason. In 2015, The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) drew 15,091 fraud complaints, resulting in 751 identified victims who lost a combined total of \$2.49 million.

In the CRA scam, criminals extort money from their victims by telephone, mail, text message or email, or a fraudulent communication that claims to be from the agency requesting personal information such as a social insurance number, credit card number, bank account number or passport number. Fraudsters impersonate the real CRA by telephone or by email. Fraudsters are either "phishing" for identification or asking that outstanding taxes be paid by a money transfer service or by pre-paid debit/credit cards. CRA fraudsters may also insist that personal information is needed so that the taxpayer can receive a refund or a benefit payment.

Cases of fraudulent communication could also involve threatening or coercive language to scare individuals into paying fictitious debt to the CRA.

Other communications urge taxpayers to visit a fake CRA website where the taxpayer is then asked to verify their identity by entering personal information. These are all scams and taxpayers should never respond to these fraudulent communications nor click on any of the links provided.

The actual CRA will never request a legitimate payment by phone, a money transfer service or by pre-paid debit/credit cards. Those who suspect they've been a victim of fraud should contact police, the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre, Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS), or online at www.tipsubmit.com/start.htm