

FINANCIAL SCAMS & FRAUDS



Whether you are a teenager or a retiree, criminals are eager to steal your personal information and your money using scams and frauds that exist in nearly every area of the marketplace, including online.

From door-to-door utility scams to online 'phishing' for your financial data, these frauds threaten your security by targeting personal information and putting you at risk of financial loss or identity theft. So, clearly it is important to know how to protect yourself.

Common Frauds And Scams Include:

IDENTITY THEFT

Identity theft occurs when a criminal steals a victim's personal information so they can pretend to be that person, and then do things like apply for a credit card, take out a loan or mortgage, get a cell-phone or withdraw bank funds. The criminal will try to get information such as a bank or credit card number and personal identity number (PIN), driver's license information and Social Insurance Number (SIN).

Sometimes they will steal or copy the documents; sometimes all they need is the information. If your wallet is lost or stolen, or mail you are expecting goes missing, you should report it right away to your bank or credit union.

BANK & CREDIT CARD FRAUD

Credit card and debit card fraud occurs when a criminal uses your card, or a counterfeit copy, to make purchases or withdraw money from your account. Keeping your card in sight, memorizing your PIN, and shielding your hand when you enter your PIN are ways you can reduce the risk of your credit card or debit card information being stolen and misused.

ONLINE SCAMS

There are many online scams and new ones appear all the time. Some appear to be asking for your help; some say there is a problem with your bank account or tax return.

Scam e-mails are often easy to spot because of spelling and other mistakes, but some can look like they are coming from a person or organization you know. If you are not sure about an e-mail, and if it asks you to open an attachment, respond with personal or financial information, or to go to another Website and enter information there - it is most likely a scam.

PHONE & DOOR-TO-DOOR SCAMS

Phone and door-to-door scams are also very common. Someone will call or come to your door pretending to be a representative of a charity, an employee of a utility company, or even a distant relative.

You might be offered a free prize or trip. So, if you are not completely sure who you are dealing with, never give the person money or any personal information.

LEARN MORE

- **THE CANADIAN CONSUMER HANDBOOK**

(www.consumerhandbook.ca/en/) provides tips, contacts, and other information that consumers can use, including information on scams and frauds, such as those noted above.

- **REPORTING SCAMS AND FRAUD**

If you suspect that you may be a target of fraud, or have fallen victim to fraud, you should contact the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre (CAFC). The CAFC collects information on illegal schemes, identity-theft and other complaints from Canadians, and is jointly managed by the RCMP, the Ontario Provincial Police, and the Competition Bureau of Canada.

CANADIAN ANTI-FRAUD CENTRE

Toll-Free: 1-888-495-8501

Toll-Free Fax: 1-888-654-9426

E-mail: info@antifraudcentre.ca

Website: www.antifraudcentre.ca