

Never Think It Cannot Happen To You

The old saying, "If It Sounds Too Good To Be True, It Probably Is", still holds true.

Never allow yourself to be rushed into a decision.

Always get it in writing.

Only deal with reputable companies.

Never pay cash.

Never pay total bill up front.

Ask for, and check references.

If it seems suspicious, call the police.

City of Virginia Beach A Certified Crime Prevention Community



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www.vbgov.com/dept/police



Virginia Beach Police
Crime Prevention
Unit

Frauds and Scams Don't be a Victim



Reducing the Opportunity

757-385-1006

Frauds and Scams



Some of the most common frauds and scams involve home improvements or requests for personal information. But by making a few simple tips you can greatly

reduce your risk of becoming a victim.

HOME IMPROVEMENTS

Some of the more common scams for home improvements are:

Door to Door Solicitations

Someone offers to do home improvements, such as roofing, painting, or siding at a reduced price. Once payment is made, little or no work is done.

High Pressure Sales

The person pushes for an immediate decision in order to get the "BEST" deal. This keeps the consumer from getting competitive bids and reviewing the contractor performance record.

Scare Tactics

A deceitful contractor offers to conduct a "free" inspection, only to find some major fault that allegedly puts the homeowner in danger. The alarmed homeowner agrees to unnecessary and overpriced work.

Large Down Payments

A contractor asks for most or all of the total cost up front, claiming to need the money to pay for supplies or laborers.

Demand for Cash

The person demands a cash payment, sometimes even offering to go to the bank with the victim. The scam artist then disappears, cash in hand.

Illegal Verbal Agreements

The contractor claims that a written contract is not required. By law, contractors are required to provide a contract for all residential work.

PROTECTING PERSONAL INFORMATION

Thieves are always looking for new ways to steal your personal information so that they can commit frauds. The Internet is their new playground.

Some of the more common scams for the Internet:

Phishing

Individuals will send you emails that appear to be from legitimate businesses, maybe even your own bank, claim that there is a problem with your account and that your personal information needs to be verified. Businesses and banks will not request this type of information by email.

Email Scams

Individuals claim that either you or they have inherited a large sum of money in a foreign country. You are asked to send money and or personal information to this person so that they can finalize a transfer of the inheritance.



Below are some helpful resources to prevent these types of scams and many others.

Home Improvements:

www.dpor.state.va.us

internet Scams

<http://www.id-protect.org/>

Other Common Scams to watch for:

Charity Fraud

Most mail solicitations for charitable contributions are legitimate but many are also fraudulent. A good rule of thumb to remember is to donate to charities that you know, be suspicious of those that accept only cash and make checks or money orders payable to the charity, not to an individual.

Insurance Fraud

Scam artists will offer any type of insurance possible at high premiums. Watch for requests for cash payments, lump-sum payments, last-chance insurance bargains, and requests for a signature on a blank insurance form.

Investment Fraud

Attempts to get you to invest money by promising a large increase in the value of your investment or higher than market interest on your capital. This type of fraud targets people through the mail and via telephone calls.

You are sent information about investing money in a business. Once your money is invested, the company disappears or goes out of business. Be aware of unrealistic profits, promoters who seem more interested in selling their distributorship or franchise than they are in the product or service being offered, and promoters who are reluctant to let you contact current franchisees.