

# Scam Alert

10/25/13

Citizens are advised to beware of unsolicited checks or checks made for more than an agreed upon amount that they receive in the mail as there have been two different instances of attempted fraud reported to the River Oaks police department this week.

In the first case a citizen was selling an item on CRAIGSLIST. The citizen was contacted by a potential buyer who asked to be allowed to overnight the citizen a check via the mail for the cost of the item being sold. When the check arrived it was for several hundred dollars more than the original price of the item. When the citizen contacted the buyer, the buyer told the citizen that he had made a mistake and asked if the citizen would cash the check and send them the balance back. The citizen was suspicious and took the check to their bank where they were informed that the check was fraudulent.

In the second case a citizen received an unsolicited sweepstakes letter addressed to them at their residence. The letter purported to be notification that the citizen had “won” a large sum of money in a sweepstakes. There was a check included in the sweepstakes notification with instructions for the citizen to deposit the check and send a “prize claim fee” of several hundred dollars to the company in order to claim their winnings. Again the check and the entire sweepstakes were found to be a fraud.

In each case the scammer sends a fraudulent check to the victim and asks the victim to deposit the check into their own bank account. The instructions involve the victim then sending a portion of the original amount, in the form of the victim’s own real check or money order back to the scammer. The victim’s check is quickly cashed before the scammer’s original check has been discovered as fraudulent.

If at any time you suspect a transaction or offer is suspicious or fraudulent you can contact the River Oaks Police Department to determine the validity of an offer or situation.

C. Spieldenner  
DCP