

ATTENTION ELDERS AND CAREGIVERS:



CURRENT SCAMS AGAINST THE ELDERLY

LOCAL SCAMS

Recently several scams have occurred against elderly residents in the City of Parma. It is important to be aware of the following scams in our area:

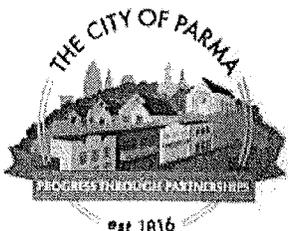
- **Overseas Group Requesting Money:** Someone will call from overseas claiming that the elderly victim has just won a large sum of money (i.e. \$10,000) and only needs to pay the taxes. The individual is then asked to send a sum of money anywhere from \$500 to \$1000 to a Western Union.
- **Using Grandchild's/Family Member's Name to Request Money Overseas:** Someone will call the elderly victim and tell the individual that a grandson/granddaughter or some other family member has been arrested in a foreign country. The individual is then persuaded to send money via Western Union for bond. Once the first amount of money is sent, the individual will receive another call that the whole case can be dismissed if more money is sent.
- **Individuals Posing as Hospice Workers:** It has been reported that an individual has come into the home of an elderly victim claiming to be the individual's hospice caretaker. After checking with hospice care services, it was discovered the individual was not a hospice care worker.
- **Telephone Calls Requesting Personal Information Claiming to be from a Jury Commission:** Someone calls pretending to be part of a Jury Commission asking for personal information such as a social security number. A Jury Commission does not exist in the State of Ohio that does this practice, and jury members are selected from registered voters only.

STATEWIDE SCAMS

In 2010, the Ohio Attorney General's Office listed the top consumer scams against the elderly as follows:

- **Grandparent scams:** Posing as grandchildren, scam artists called grandparents and tricked them into sending money. Some grandparents wired several thousand dollars to another country, believing their grandchildren were stranded and needed help.
- **Medicare scams:** In another ploy aimed at seniors, scam artists pretended to represent Medicare or the Social Security Administration to phish for seniors' personal information. They asked for bank account and Social Security numbers, falsely stating seniors would receive new Medicare cards.
- **Foreclosure rescue scams:** Scammers continued to target homeowners by making false promises to help save their homes from foreclosure. They took homeowners' money but never provided any real help.
- **Timeshare scams:** As consumers attempted to sell their timeshares, scam artists made false promises to help them. Consumers paid sums ranging from \$300 to \$3,000 but never received the service.

City of Parma
Law Department
6611 Ridge Road
Parma, Ohio 44129
P: 440.885.8132
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- **Phony debt collectors:** Posing as legitimate debt collectors, scammers contacted consumers and said they owed money on payday loans. In reality, consumers either did not owe the debt at all, or they owed it to someone else.
- **Sweepstakes scams:** Complaints about sweepstakes scams grew in 2010, as consumers reported receiving calls and letters stating they had won millions in foreign lotteries and other contests they never entered. All foreign lotteries are illegal in the U.S.
- **Credit repair scams:** Scammers told consumers that they could completely clean up their credit reports and improve their credit scores for a fee. As usual, the offers were too good to be true and consumers' credit never improved. Accurate negative information cannot be removed from a credit report for a minimum of seven years.
- **Fake check scams:** Scam artists continued to use fake checks in 2010, often as part of sweepstakes or job opportunity scams. They convinced consumers to deposit the checks and then wire-transfer some of the money. Later the check was returned as counterfeit and consumers lost any money they sent.
- **Shoddy home improvement work:** From unfinished roofs to driveways that were never properly paved, shoddy home repairs affected consumers across the state.
- **Facebook scams:** With more than 500 million users, Facebook was a ripe market for scams. From a phony "dislike" button to a "Coca-Cola" video that lured victims into providing personal information, Facebook users had to navigate carefully.

WHO TO CONTACT WHEN FRAUD OCCURS

In the event that you or someone you care for may be the victim of fraud in the City of Parma, the following places are available to you to report an incident of fraud:

City of Parma Police Department

5555 Powers Blvd.
Parma, Ohio 44129
(440) 885-1234
<http://www.cityofparmapolice.com/>

Parma Detective Bureau

(440) 887-7360
<http://www.cityofparmapolice.com/departments/detective-bureau.htm>

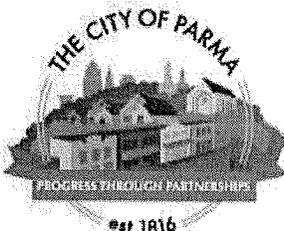
Crime Tip-Line

(440) 887-7340

Ohio Attorney General's Office Elder Fraud

<http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Services/Seniors/Elder-Fraud>. You may file a complaint with the Ohio Attorney General at www.SpeakOutOhio.gov or call (800) 282-0515.

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Ohio Department of Aging

Bonnie Kantor-Burman, Director

Ohio Department of Aging

50 W. Broad St./9th Floor

Columbus, OH 43215-3363

Call toll-free at 1-800-266-4346 (Monday through Friday, 8 A.M. to 5 P.M.)

TTY - Relay Ohio: Dial 711 and use 614-466-5500 for general information

<http://aging.ohio.gov/home/Default.aspx>

Take Action: Protect Yourself from Fraud Initiative

<http://www.takeaction.ohio.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

City of Parma Ohio Protect Yourself Against Identity Theft Guide

<http://www.cityofparma-oh.gov/documents/protect-yourself-against-identity-theft-2009.pdf>

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