



CHRISTIANSBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT

Mark A. Sisson, Chief of Police

10 East Main Street
Christiansburg, Virginia 24073
Telephone (540) 382-3131
Fax (540) 382-0877

*****FOR IMMEDIATE PRESS RELEASE*****

Citizens Should Be Vigilant of Potential Scams

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The Christiansburg Police Department has recently seen an uptick in potential scams that target members of the community and citizens are reminded to be vigilant at home, when contacted via phone, and when using email and/or the internet.

The following are a few examples of recent scams seen in town:

-Magazine sales for troops overseas

These sales people utilize aggressive and/or high pressure sales tactics. They typically target senior citizens and nearly always insist on cash-only transactions. They may also be trying to sell other products or services.

TIPS:

- 1) Keep your screen door locked at all times, as this keeps a barrier between you and the person at your door. It makes it more difficult for them to be pushy or try to get inside your home.
- 2) Never invite sales people inside your home.
- 3) Ask to see a business license from the Town of Christiansburg. If they cannot produce one, do not purchase anything from them.
- 4) When in doubt – or if a sales person is being pushy or won't take no for an answer – call the Christiansburg Police Department at 382-3131 or 911. We are happy to respond to your home.

-Mailed or emailed notification that you've won the lottery or you've been selected to be a secret shopper

This scam will typically involve sending you a check to cash and then a request to send a certain amount or percent back to "pay taxes on the winnings" or a "processing fee," etc.

TIPS:

- 1) As a general rule of thumb, the lottery doesn't find you and secret shopping companies don't seek out participants. The safest thing to do is to always treat these solicitations as scams.
- 2) If it's a check you weren't expecting or don't recognize, it's probably a scam.

Police Lieutenant Randy Bonds states it plainly, "In my 14 years in law enforcement, I have never seen a case where someone was sent a check and had to send money back that wasn't a scam."

According to Bonds, this money is typically forwarded out of the country and is simply impossible to track or have refunded.

Citizens wishing to learn more about preventing scams or setting up a Neighborhood Watch program that can help deter scammers using high pressure sales tactics are encouraged to contact the Christiansburg Police Department's Crime Prevention Unit. Officers in the Crime Prevention Unit will conduct trainings or share information with any group – formal or informal; large or small. They may be contacted by calling (540) 382-3131 x324 or by filling out an online form, found at <http://www.christiansburg.org/forms.aspx?FID=86> or <http://www.christiansburg.org> > Departments > Police > Online Forms > Crime Prevention Program Request.

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Contact:

Becky Wilburn
Public Relations Officer
Town of Christiansburg
bwilburn@christiansburg.org
(540) 382-6128