



CITY OF LA CRESCENT

Department of Police

Chief Luke M. Ahlschlager



Scam Prevention Quick Tips

Information to share with friends & family – especially elders who don't see updates on social media.

House phones (land lines) and Cell Phone calls:

- The FBI does not call you. The Police or Sheriff's office won't call and threaten to arrest you. Be aware; the scam caller tries to scare the person to make them panic and react fast. A threat of being arrested for non-compliance is a huge red flag, and they are going to ask for money.
- Having a landline (house phone) helps scammers reach elder victims because the older generation is more likely to answer calls and may believe they know the caller if the phone number looks local. Caller ID may show the incoming call is local, don't believe the number shown is local. Scammers are able to go through a computer to make the phone number look local, or familiar.
- Social Security will not call you, though the caller sounds convincing, do not share information.
- Publisher's Clearing House will not call you. Scammers even have you choose a color for your 'new car' that you need to pay 'taxes' on before they can bring it over. No one gets a new car of course.
- A scam caller acting like they are a grandchild held in jail needing bail is common. Today's computers can make the caller sound like your family member! The best thing to do is hang up and call that family member or their parent to verify the person is alright.

Red Flags (Be aware of these scam tricks):



You are being told to act quickly, to not tell anyone, or that you should allow the caller to remote onto your computer. Scam!

The caller tries to obtain ANY personal information – like date of birth, banking info, passwords. Scam!

You are told to buy gift cards to help pay a jail fee or other emergency. Scam!

You are told to withdraw money and lie to the bank employee about the reason. Scam!

The caller tells you to not hang up, that they will stay on the phone with you while you buy gift cards or go to the bank. Scam!

Calls about Medicare should not be trusted when it's an automated voice that then sends you to "their supervisor", who turns out to be (you guessed it) the Scammer.

If you are made to feel you need to hurry, or you feel pressure to help the caller, slow down.

You could tell the scammer to call you back at the police department to finish this call. They most likely will hang up on you.

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Computers and Cell Phones:

- Some scams are on the computer, where an ad pops up or an email prompts you to call a phone number. The ad claims you are nearly filling the computer space capacity or there is a major computer virus and you need to call a phone number. Don't do it. That call will connect you to the Scammer.
- When a message takes you off of what you are doing and sends you to another mode, that is most likely a scammer "phishing" to get you on their radar. They next will want access to your computer and can eventually get into your accounts and personal information should you let them remote in. Let them know you want to call the police to ask before you go any further with the call.
- Cell phone or email scams may send a text or email about a Pay Pal account charging you extra, and that you should call to get your money back. It's not true, they just want access to your bank account. When you place a call, you are directly connecting with the Scammer.
- Another common cell phone text scam advises you to click a link to track a package. Don't leave the screen you are on – that is a red flag that they are on the hunt for someone who may believe them. Do not click a link, don't call a number. Delete and block that contact.
- There is a cell phone text scam stating you owe money for an unpaid toll. Some say in WI, where there are no Tolls. But some people react to fight the charge and end up being stuck in a tango with a scammer trying to get their money by pretending to offer a refund (and there never was a charge).
- If you are unsure about an email being legitimate, have a family member review it. Do not open links and do not respond until you seek another set of eyes to review it.

Romance scams:

If you think you are in an online relationship with someone you've not met in person, have a family member help to verify this person is real and not an attempt to get your money or personal information.

Pet scams:

A pet scam is where you think you are buying a cat or puppy or bird. But first they advise they need you to send money to hold the purchase. Then you can't reach them again. It's important to not trust online interactions. When the focus is on your personal information or getting your money, be wary.



If you fall victim to a scam, you are *not* stupid. Those who are in the fraud arena are just superbly convincing.

Reporting a scam is best – especially before you share information or money.

Check with family or friends before reacting. That is one step that may save you from going too far with a stranger online or on the phone. Being aware and avoiding the situation is best.

Join La Crescent Police Department on Facebook for news, updates, and fun photos of our community!

Stay safe, and remember we are here around the clock. If you have a true emergency, dial 911.

Non-emergency LCPD phone: 507-895-4414

LCPD Email: lacrescentpolice@cityoflacrescent-mn.gov