



# DenverDA

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## **Fraud Alert!!!**

### **Lottery Scams Take on a Bold, New Tone**

#### **Denver Couple Loses Thousands**

The Denver District Attorney's Office is alerting people that bolder, and more elaborate lottery scams are being perpetrated over the telephone. Last month, an elderly couple in Denver fell victim to just such a scam. The couple was called repeatedly over the course of a week and instructed to wire money for 'incidental fees' before their winning check of \$3.5 million could be released. The couple wired tens of thousands of dollars before realizing it was a scam. The Denver District Attorney's Office alerted the victims bank, which was able to issue 'stop-payments' on some of the checks, but the victims lost \$23,000 that will never be recovered.

And the scam didn't end there! Realizing authorities were on to his scam, the con artist contacted his victims, this time posing as an "investigator" with the Federal Trade Commission. He tried, unsuccessfully, to swindle the couple out of more money, claiming the 'suspect' could not be prosecuted unless they contributed funds.

#### **Warning signs:**

- Be suspicious of any notification that you have won a lottery, especially if you haven't *paid to play*. In order to win, you must first purchase a ticket. Winners contact the gaming agent, and use their ticket as verification that they have won.
- It is illegal in Colorado to collect "fees" on any lottery winnings.
- Any solicitation that asks to wire money should be a red flag. Once the money is sent and picked up on the other end, it cannot be tracked.
- It is illegal in the United States to play foreign lotteries! Many scams originate out of Nigeria. Be suspicious of any caller with a foreign accent.

**Denver DA's Fraud Line: 720-913-9179**

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