FRAUD ALERT!

From the Office of Denver District Attorney Mitch Morrissey

Preventing Caregiver Exploitation

Older adults are living longer than ever. This longevity is unfortunately increasing the incidence of caregiver financial exploitation. Most cases involve family members or trusted associates and can include: taking money or property; forging an older person's signature; and getting an older person to sign a deed or will through deception or coercion.

The Denver DA's Office suggests doing your estate planning early. If putting adult children in charge of an estate is a problem, consider hiring a third party - an attorney or a CPA - who is not emotionally attached. Other preventative steps include:

- Using direct deposit for Social Security checks and retirement benefits.
- Keeping debit/credit cards, checkbooks and other valuables hidden if you have regular visitors to your home or apartment.
- Reviewing your financial statements every month – especially if someone is paying your bills and managing your accounts.
- Choosing your Power of Attorney with care and setting up a system of checks and balances so no one person has complete control.
- Being careful about letting family, friends or tenants live in your house.
- Treating home care workers like employees, not friends.
- Maintaining contact with family, friends, and neighbors. The more active you are, the less likely you are to be exploited.

CASE partnership

For assistance call the
Denver DA's Fraud Line: 720-913-9179
www.denverda.org

CASE is a Partnership of the District Attorney and the community to Prevent Elder Financial Exploitation

August 2006