



Mitch Morrissey,  
Denver District Attorney

# FRAUD ALERT!

From the Office of Denver District Attorney Mitch Morrissey

## Top 10 Scams and Rip-Offs of 2009 from the BBB

*...to be continued in 2010*

1. **H1N1 Scams:** Scams attempted to scare consumers into purchasing cures or providing essential information to prevent the H1N1 virus.
2. **Memorabilia:** 2009 provided many opportunities for scammers to sell memorabilia and collectibles at inflated prices.
3. **Weight Loss Pills Free Trial Offers:** Free trial offers for weight loss pills actually ended up costing unsuspecting consumers thousands of dollars.
5. **Phishing E-mails:** Phishing e-mails appearing to be from government agencies popped up in in-boxes. These phishing emails attempted to trick victims into divulging sensitive financial information.
6. **Mystery Shopping:** Consumers were told they would be paid to secretly shop in order to evaluate merchants' customer service. In some instances, victims were asked to wire money back to scammers as a way to evaluate money wiring services such as MoneyGram and Western Union. Victims who participated were sent authentic looking checks which, when cashed left the victims "holding the bag".
6. **Lottery Scams:** Victims received bogus letters or phone calls informing them that they had won millions of dollars. Unfortunately, victims were also told they had to wire hundreds or thousands of dollars back to the scammers to cover taxes or other bogus fees.
7. **Friend/Family in Distress:** Also known as the Grandma Scam, victims received messages from scammers claiming to be "friends" or "family members" needing immediate help. Victims were asked to wire money to pay for lawyer's fees or to post bail.
8. **Mortgage Foreclosure Rescue/Debt Assistance:** Victims paid upfront fees to avoid home foreclosures or to get help with credit card debt - with no results.
9. **Job Hunter Scams:** Job seekers paid bogus upfront fees as part of an application process. Job applicants were also asked to provide personal financial information or social security numbers under the guise of evaluating their applications.
10. **Robocalls:** Thousands of people received automated telephone calls related to auto warranties and lower credit card interest rates.

Questions or assistance related to fraud: Denver DA's Fraud Line: 720-913-9179

*Follow us on Twitter @DenverScamAlert*

December 2009