



HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE
Community Outreach Section
410-313-2207

Be Scam-Smart

Howard County, Maryland, and the country-at-large, has seen an increase in scam-related thefts. They may be easy to perpetrate....**BUT THEY ARE EVEN EASIER TO PREVENT.**

Scammers are smart, and will change their stories as law enforcement catches on to each new scam. **BUT...they ALL have the same general characteristics. And they all REQUIRE YOU TO TAKE ACTION.** “If you don’t play...you don’t pay.”

KNOW...what a scam looks and sounds like

- If it’s too good to be true, it probably is.
- Scammers often say they belong to the IRS, Police, or Sheriff’s office, and that you owe money. Police and government agencies don’t operate this way.

DON’T...

- Give personal or financial information over the phone or email
- Take checks from someone and then remove most of it in cash, expecting to keep “a portion” of the money. The checks will not clear and you will be left holding the bag (again...too good to be true?)
- Click on links in emails. Always open a fresh window and type in what you know to be the legitimate web address of a business.
- Give out your credit card number, or a prepaid card number (green-dot), to someone you don’t know. **EVER.**
- Give or wire money to someone you don’t know. **EVER.**

DO...

- Hang up and call the main number of the person calling you to confirm they are a legitimate business.
- A web search on the phone number or business calling you
- Call the police to see if it might be a scam before you commit.
- **TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS.**

In the case of scams...

“The best defense is a good DEFENSE.”

The Howard County Police Department, Community Outreach Section, offers free crime prevention presentations for your community or business. Contact 410-313-2207 to schedule.

3410 Court House Drive, Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

