



FROM WELD COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY KENNETH R. BUCK
FOR THE C.A.S.E. PROGRAM

FRAUD ALERT!

2011 REVIEW: REMINDERS ON HOW TO KEEP YOUR INFORMATION SAFE



Throughout the past year, the Weld County District Attorney's Office has emailed Fraud Alerts to more than 100 churches and senior centers throughout the county warning residents of the latest scams and offering tips on how to protect personal and financial information.

The following is a recap of the scams we saw in 2011 and reminders as to what you can do to make sure you don't become a victim.

THE MYSTERIOUS (AND POORLY WRITTEN) EMAIL/LETTER:

Several scams surfaced this year in the form of "official" looking emails from government agencies, assistance programs and even foreign lottery commissions. In most cases, these emails or letters were filled with misspellings, poor grammar and incomplete sentences — a huge

red flag that the correspondence is suspect.

DOOR-TO-DOOR SOLICITORS:

Whether offering to repair your driveway or sign you up for a particular service, treat all door-to-door solicitations with caution. Don't make impulsive decisions, regardless of how good of deal the offer may seem or how urgent the problem (which wasn't really a problem before you answered the door) is. Ask for company identification, brochures, and additional information they have outlining their product or service, and never let a stranger into your home.

CREDIT CARD SKIMMING:

This one hit northern Colorado residents hard this year. Skimming is when the information contained on the magnetic strip of your credit or debit card is stolen and used to tap into your financial accounts. When using ATMs, movie rental machines, or any device through which you run your card, make sure that device has not been altered. If it doesn't look like the rest of the machine, if it is loose or if it looks like it has been added to the machine, walk away. Also, check your financial statements often, daily if you can, and make sure there have been no unauthorized withdrawals from your account. If there have been, contact your bank immediately.