

**FROM THE OFFICE OF
WELD COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY KENNETH R. BUCK**



Fraud Alert!

REWARD OF REBATES REDUCED BY RUNAROUND

As you spend your gift cards and gift certificates this season, you may come across some deals that tout rebate offers on a variety of popular products. Many people are discovering, however, that applying for a rebate and actually receiving a rebate can be two very different things. In some instances, people have mailed in all of the necessary paperwork and receipts only to be told that the information never reached the company handling the rebate. Other people have had to contact that company offering the rebate numerous times in order to follow the status of their claim. So what can you do to head off the headaches of rebate runaround? Here are a few tips:

READ THE FINE PRINT

According to the Federal Trade Commission, there are no limits to the rules and requirements surrounding rebates. You must, however, as a consumer, be made aware of whatever those rules and requirements are. Read the rebate offer in its entirety before purchasing the product. Ask questions of the sales clerk regarding the rebate. Take the time to understand what you will be required to do in order to obtain the rebate then decide if you are willing to meet those requirements.

DON'T LEAVE ANYTHING BLANK

Some companies will do their best to make sure you don't qualify for the rebate offer. If you leave any blanks in the rebate form, for example, that may be enough reason for the company to deny your application. If the application asks for something you don't have, such as a fax number, fill in the blank with "not applicable" or "do not have such number".

MAKE COPIES OF THE FORMS YOU SUBMIT

In order to qualify for many rebates you need to fill out forms, send in receipts and provide original UPC codes from the box the merchandise was packaged in. If you should ever have to prove that you sent in all of the necessary information, copies of these items will come in very handy. Also save any correspondence mailed or emailed (or take notes of phone conversations) regarding your rebate. The more information you can compile about your effort to obtain the rebate the more successful you may be.

SEND THE FORMS BY CERTIFIED MAIL

To avoid the frustration of being told that your rebate forms were never received by the rebate company, send the forms via certified mail or return receipt. By doing so, you will have not only the date your form was received by the company but also the name of the person who signed for the letter.

Contact your local police agency if you think you are a victim of a crime. To contact the Weld County District Attorney's Office, call (970) 356-4010 ext. 4702. For a calendar of monthly tips, go to www.weldda.com!