



# **Fraud Alert!**

## **THE GIVING SEASON** **Tips to Avoid Telemarketing Scams**

**Weld County District Attorney Kenneth R. Buck would like you to take note of the following information so that you aren't the next victim.**

These beautiful autumn days mark not only the end of summer but also the start of the gift-giving season. Soon our radios and televisions will be enticing us to shop for the perfect gift or to donate to the right charity. Telemarketers, too, will join in the spirit, and you may start receiving calls from people selling goods over the phone or asking for donations. Beware: according to the National Consumer League's National Fraud Information Center, nearly a third of all telemarketing fraud victims are age 60 or older.

### **Things to remember about telemarketing:**

1. Fraudulent telemarketers are criminals interested in money, not people.
2. Good sales people are convincing, but so are good criminals.
3. A common thread among telemarketing scams is the demand for payment upfront.
4. It is illegal for companies that operate contests or sweepstakes to ask you to pay to enter or to claim a prize.
5. If you have to pay first, before getting detailed information about the offer, it is probably a scam.

### **Beware if:**

1. A telemarketer demands you act immediately or else you will miss out on the opportunity.
2. A telemarketer refuses to send you written information before you agree to buy a product or donate to a charity.
3. A telemarketer attempts to scare you into buying something or guilt you into donating money to their cause.
4. A telemarketer insists that you wire money or have a courier pick up your payment.
5. A telemarketer refuses to stop calling after you have asked them not to call again.

### **Give your self a gift:**

1. Don't fill out contest entry forms, they are a source of leads for con-artists.
2. Know who you are dealing with: check out companies and charities with the Better Business Bureau.
3. Screen your calls with an answering machine or caller id.
4. Have a plan for speaking with telemarketers. Be polite but firm, and hang up if someone refuses to answer your questions or if you detect a scam.

**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. 4722.**