

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



Fraud Alert!

EVERYBODY IS GETTING RICH — OR ARE THEY? DON'T FALL FOR PHONY LOTTERY SCAMS.

I am so excited—this weekend I found out that I won one million Euros in the Euro Lottery! I have the email to prove it. And Russ, another Weld County resident, won \$175,000 in the North American Ballot Sweepstakes. He even received a cashier's check for \$3,988.00 to cover insurance and processing fees for his winnings! Luckily, Russ was suspicious and instead of falling for this scam he emailed copies of the "winnings" letter and the check to our office so that we could inform others about this type of fraud.

HOW YOU CAN USE YOUR COMPUTER AND YOUR COMMON SENSE TO DETECT A SCAM:

The letter Russ received was from Rex Global, Inc., (or the Currency House—both are listed on the top of the letterhead). The letter is full of head-spinning details such as names, cash amounts, reference numbers and phone numbers. The letter looks a bit sloppy, however, with different fonts and different type sizes cluttering the page—not very professional looking at all. If you Google the company name, Rex Global, Inc., you will see that this company doesn't have a web site—unusual in this day and age. If you Google the company phone number, you will be told that the number doesn't match any documents (read: it is unlisted or doesn't exist). The address listed on the letterhead is for a post office box in New York but the area code for the phone number listed in the letter is for Ontario, Canada.

The cashier's check provides additional red flags that indicate that this is a scam. If you search for the bank name, Google returns several sites. None, however, match the bank name and logo on the check. Underneath the bank name the following is printed, "Member FIDC." If this were a legitimate check it would read, "Member FDIC" standing for Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. The area code for the bank phone number is traced to Alberta, Canada, and does not match any phone number when Googled. Lastly, where as most checks like this will say "Void after 180 days" this one says "Not Void After 180 Days"—I guess this scam is good indefinitely!

QUICK REMINDERS ABOUT LOTTERIES:

- If you didn't buy a ticket, you cannot win.
- You never have to pay to collect your winnings, and taxes are paid *after* you receive your winnings; there are no other fees.
- If you hold a winning lottery ticket, you have to notify the lottery; they will not notify you.
- It is illegal under U.S. Federal Law to play any foreign lottery from the United States.
- If the lottery isn't conducted by a government or government-authorized charity, it isn't legitimate.

SITES TO BOOK MARK:

www.consumerfraudreporting.org

www.fbi.gov

www.ftc.gov

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.