



# FRAUD ALERT!

Weld County District Attorney's Office

October 2016

## Uncovering the Mask: Charity Scams

Can you smell it? Fall is in the air. Yes - that means colorful leaves, pumpkins, and **HAPPY HALLOWEEN!** But **WATCH OUT!** Charity scammers are lurking... looking to trick while stealing the treat.

### Did You Know?

Close to 80 percent of adult Coloradans gave to charity last year. That's great! So what? **HALF** of those never verified the charity's legitimacy (*AARP Foundation*).

59 percent of Coloradans who made contributions did **NOT** ask how much of the money would go to the charity itself (*AARP Foundation*).

## Scams to 👁️👁️ For:

Some scammers focus on specific causes to play on your **generosity** and **emotions**. Rip-off artists often focus on emotional appeals.

### Examples:

- ◆ United States Disabled Veterans— **FAKE**
- ◆ Disabled Veterans of America— **FAKE**
- ◆ Disabled Firefighters Foundation — **FAKE**
- ◆ Paralyzed American Veterans — **FAKE**

### Tips:

- ◆ Donate to charities with a track record and a history. Scam artists follow major headlines and invent charities overnight.
- ◆ Trust your gut and check your records. Scammers **trick** you by thanking you for a pledge you didn't make...and then ask you to make another donation.
- ◆ Check before you give. Many scammers use nice, shiny logos. The name may even sound like a respected organization. Do your research before making a pledge.

*"Don't let someone take advantage of your kindness and dedication to the community. A legitimate charitable organization will allow you time to make an informed decision. Think with your brain, not with your heart."*

*- Michael Rourke, Weld County  
District Attorney*

### Helpful Offices

- National Association of State Charity Officials
- Better Business Bureau's Wise Giving Alliance
- Charity Navigator
- Charity Watch
- Guide Star