

Wyckoff Police Department

Tips on avoiding scams and frauds

Over the last few years, the numbers and types of frauds in our society have risen dramatically. In these crimes, residents may be solicited with an offer of winning a large lottery, participating in a “shopping survey” or even selling an item on the internet. In many of these scams, the victims are asked to forward money via Western Union or MoneyGram. NEVER wire money to an unknown party! Below are listed some examples of scams and frauds that have been perpetrated against Wyckoff residents.

- If you receive a check for an item you are selling and the check amount is larger than your asking price, this is likely a fictitious check. Recently, even checks labeled as a “cashier’s check” or a “money order” has been found to be a fake. Ask a manager at your bank if the check is fictitious before you deposit it. You will be responsible for the money if the check is a fake and you withdraw the funds or write checks against the deposit, not the bank.
- If you buy or sell items that are listed on Craigslist or any other internet site, read their information on scams and frauds.
- If you are buying or selling items on E-Bay, do not leave the protection of that website to complete the transaction.
- If someone asks you to wire them money via Western Union or MoneyGram, DON’T! This is very likely a scam. Wyckoff residents have wired thousands of dollars to criminal scam artists over the last couple of years. Due to MoneyGram and Western Union policies, none of the money has been recovered and none of the suspects have been identified.
- If you’re asked to participate in “shopping survey” and are sent a check to buy items with, check with your bank manager BEFORE you deposit the check. Ask if the check is fictitious; don’t just ask when the check will clear.
- If you have elderly parents, keep an eye on their finances. Many of our seniors have been scammed by criminals who promise large returns on investments or who convince them that they will receive a large lottery prize if they simply forward a check to “cover expenses” or to “cover the taxes” on the prize.

If you have any questions about a transaction you are about to undertake or any proposition that has been made to you, don’t hesitate to call the Wyckoff Police and ask for advice. **REMEMBER: If it sounds too good to be true, it usually is!**