

RELOAD SCAM

The Commercial Crime and Fraud Sections with the Saskatoon Police Service, Regina Police Service, Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission, and the RCMP "F" Division have joined forces to promote March as Fraud Awareness Month to Saskatchewan residents and consumers.

During this fifth week of Fraud Awareness Month, the fraudulent activity to be profiled is the **Reload Scam**.

Residents of Saskatchewan have and continue to fall victim to what is referred to as a "reload scam". In nearly all instances the victim has already lost money on some form of investment opportunity which is usually a scam as well. With all the victim information already known to the fraudsters, they take aim at the victim one or more time in an effort to take any and all money that is available.

Victim's names from an initial fraud are circulated amongst groups of con men, usually for a cost and the victims are then approached with a bogus offer to "help" recover those lost funds. This is done in a number of ways. The scammer offers to buy the victim's stocks at a very attractive price, much higher than originally paid, however the victim must first send a purchase fee which goes in the scammers pocket.

Another ploy is for the scammer to call the victim claiming that they work for a government agency or foreign organization and they can recover the lost money, again for a fee. However this second caller is often as phony as the first and often works for the company that took their money in the first place. By paying this recovery fee the victims have now been double-scammed.

A third version occurs when buyers of worthless shares of stock are approached with a plan to revive the original bankrupt company. To get the money back the victim is required to contribute a fee per share cost. However, again this money goes into the scammer's pocket.

Senior citizens appear to be the most targeted. When faced with a loss of funds some will go along with another scheme in which the con artists promise to make good on the original funds that were lost and possibly even generate new returns well beyond those originally promised. Seniors on a fixed income lose money that is unlikely to be replenished in the event of a fraud. This results in a panic that is preyed on by con artists who have developed schemes to take a "second bite" out of those who have already been victimized. Though the desire to make up lost financial ground is understandable, all too often the result is that unwary senior citizens lose whatever savings they have left in the wake of the initial scam.

The reload scam is not limited to any one group in Saskatchewan and all residents should be aware of this type of activity. If approached by phone, email or any means, they should contact both the Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission (SFSC) and their local police.

For more information contact:

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