



Royal Canadian Mounted Police Gendarmerie royale du Canada



news release

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Beware of Charity Scams

The holiday season is a traditional time of giving for many Canadians. Unfortunately, fraudsters know that and take advantage of our generosity. RCMP Saskatchewan's "F" Division Commercial Crime Sections are advising members of the public to be aware of the "Charity Scam." Before you give anything to a charity, you should perform your due diligence.

The following is a list of things to watch for when considering donating to a charity:

- Never give out your personal / financial information out over the phone, or at the door.
- Don't donate cash if you can help it. Write the cheque to the charity – not to the person standing in front of you. This also helps you document the donation for your records and for your tax return.
- Carefully check the name of the company. Charity scams often use similar to original names to cause confusion and obtain your donations. Example: National Cancer Society (SCAM) instead of Canadian Cancer Society (REAL).
- Ask the charity to send you printed material via mail. If the material does not contain details on exactly how the money is used and the percent of donations which actually reach the given cause, do not contribute.
- Call the charity. Legitimate charities withstand scrutiny and never hesitate to prove who they are, what they do and how they do it.
- Don't give in to pressure. If the charity representative pressures you to give money immediately or as soon as possible, get suspicious.

- Be careful if the "charity" accepts an online payment. It is easy to open up a fake online payment account.
- Reputable charities will have a street address and a phone number.
- Get a receipt with the name of the charity on it.
- Ask for the charitable registration number.
- Check the company with the Better Business Bureau.
- Consult the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) Charities Listings at www.cra.gc.ca/donors or call 1-800-267-2384 to confirm that a charity is registered with CRA.
- One of the best ways to avoid charity scams is to decide IN ADVANCE which charities you'll support and contact them.

Fraud Awareness is part of a national crime prevention campaign to increase Canadians' awareness of and knowledge about different types of fraud in order to help citizens to not become fraud victims. RCMP Saskatchewan's "F" Division Commercial Crime Section has offices in Regina and Saskatoon. Their role is to reduce the impact of economic crime on Canadians by maintaining the integrity of our economy through public education, crime prevention, and enforcement.

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