



Be Aware of Scams related to COVID-19 Crisis

The Coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic is among us. Sadly, there are a small percentage of people that will take advantage of situations like this for their own personal benefit.

“Scammers are becoming more sophisticated. Scams can originate over the phone, in person or online and with the increased in technology, a lot of these scams are hard to detect on emails and social media,” said Police Constable. Ken Macdonald, who is also a member of the local Regional Emergency Management Organization.

Macdonald advised citizens to always check and verify sources. If it sounds too good to be true, it is. When in doubt, contact your local police or the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre.

“It’s an important reminder, especially for people who want to help others in our community who could quickly be duped by scams in any form, be aware and check the source before you pass any personal information,” he said.

The provincial government is aware of situations where misinformation about COVID-19 cases is being shared in communities and to businesses. They are also aware of fraudulent calls from people claiming to be Public Health and asking for credit card/financial information.

As needed, Public Health will provide notification of potential exposures to COVID-19 with individuals, businesses, organizations, or communities. This will range from direct outreach to people who may have been exposed and organizations where exposure may have occurred and, if warranted, broader public communication.

When Public Health calls people to discuss COVID-19 test results or to follow-up through our investigations, financial information is NEVER requested. If you receive a call like this asking for financial information, please do not provide your financial or personal information.

The federal government is also aware of many scams in relation to COVID-19. There have been recent reports of fraudulent telephone calls that appear to be from the COVID-19 Information Service at 1-833-784-4397. These calls are fraudulent and were not placed by the Government of Canada. Don't give out personal information if you didn't initiate the call. Callers who have received a suspicious telephone call can report it by contacting the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre.

Always be suspicious of spoofed government, healthcare or research information, unsolicited calls, emails and texts giving medical advice or requesting urgent action or payment. If you didn't initiate contact, you don't know who you're communicating to. Never respond or click on suspicious links and attachments and never give out your personal or financial details.

Unauthorized or fraudulent charities requesting money for victims, products or research. Don't be pressured into making a donation, verify that a charity is registered, high-priced or low-quality products purchased in bulk by consumers and resold for profit. These items may be expired and/or dangerous to your health. Be aware of questionable offers, such as: miracle cures, herbal remedies, vaccinations faster testing, fake and deceptive online ads, including cleaning products, hand sanitizers, other items in high demand.

Fraudsters are posing as:

- Cleaning or heating companies offering duct cleaning services or air filters to protect from COVID-19.
- Local and provincial hydro/electrical power companies threatening to disconnect your power for non-payment.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the World Health Organization offering fake lists for sale of COVID-19 infected people in your neighbourhood.
- Public Health Agency of Canada giving false results saying you have been tested positive for COVID-19, tricking you into confirming your health card and credit card numbers for a prescription.
- Red Cross and other known charities offering free medical products (e.g. masks) for a donation.
- Government departments sending out coronavirus-themed phishing emails, tricking you into opening malicious attachments, tricking you to reveal sensitive personal and financial details.
- Financial advisors pressuring people to invest in hot new stocks related to the disease, offering financial aid and/or loans to help you get through the shutdowns.
- Door-to-door salespeople selling household decontamination services.
- Private companies offering fast COVID-19 tests for sale. Only health care providers can perform the tests. No other tests are genuine or guaranteed to provide accurate results, selling fraudulent products that claim to treat or prevent the disease. Unapproved drugs threaten public health and violate federal laws.

For more information:

<https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/>

<https://www.antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca/>