

September 30, 2008

**City of Columbus
Division of Police
Forgery – Fraud Unit**

"WORK AT HOME" SCAM ALERT

Central Ohio residents are warned to beware of "Work At Home" scams that involve the worker returning money to the "employer". This is still another version of the popular "excess amount check or money-order" scams.

In this scam, the person who signs up for (or responds to an invitation for) a "Work At Home" job receives a check or money order which they are instructed to deposit in their own bank account, and then wire part of the amount back to the "company." The entire check eventually is found to be worthless, and the worker is scammed out of the amount they wired back (plus any of the rest of the check that they used).

The latest version of this scam is the "Secret Shopper", where workers are sent a check to use in sample purchases of merchandise, but must send part of the check back.

Additional information on this and similar employment or check/money-order scams can be found at:

[Federal Trade Commission - Mystery Shopper Alert](#)

[Fake Checks.Org](#)

[SNOPEs.com](#)

"CRAIGSLIST AUTO SALES" SCAM ALERT

In recent months there has been a noticeable increase in Central Ohio residents being scammed while attempting to purchase vehicles from *Craigslist*. Central Ohio residents are warned to beware of "Craig's List Auto Sales" scams that involve individuals attempting to purchase vehicles online. Unfortunately, there are plenty of scam artists on *Craigslist* who want nothing more than to con you into sending them money or/and your personal info. Many times the con artist will request that the money be sent via *Western Union*.

The two golden rules as stated by *Craigslist*, (a) is to deal locally with folks that you can meet in person and (b) never ever, send any personal information or money to some random guy you contacted through e-mail. Most of the times scammers are flogged by users and thus removed from *Craigslist*, but there some cases were this doesn't happen.

But how do you know it's a scam? Well, for one you ask for the exact location of the car in your e-mail if it's not stated in the post. If it's a scam, the poster will a) not reply or b), he'll tell you that the car is located somewhere far and that he'll ship it to you once you wire money.

If you are a victim of this sort of crime, please contact your local police department in order to file a report. You can also file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission.

Phone: Call our toll-free helpline: 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357);
TTY: 1-866-653-4261

Mail: Write to:
Federal Trade Commission
Consumer Response Center
600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20580

Sgt. K. Winn #5300
Forgery – Fraud Unit 1st Shift