

WESTFIELD BANK – PROTECTING YOU AND YOUR MONEY SECURITY AND FRAUD INFORMATIONAL SERIES: CHECK FRAUD

Fraud professionals have become increasingly skilled and sophisticated, thanks to advances in readily available technology such as personal computers, scanners and color photocopiers. Criminals today can defraud you quite easily in a variety of ways in order to steal money from you. In this third edition of Protecting You and Your Money we examine popular check fraud techniques and present you with tips to help prevent you and your company from becoming a victim of fraud.



How it occurs – you could be involved in a fraud or are about to be scammed if:

- You receive a check from an item you sold on the Internet and the amount of the check is more than the item's selling price.
- You receive a check from someone you have been communicating with by email.
- You receive a check drawn on a business or individual account that is different from the person buying your item or product.
- You have been informed that you are the winner of a lottery such as the Canadian, Australian, El Gordo, El Mundo or Publisher's Clearing House *that you did not enter*.
- You have been instructed to either "wire" "send" or "ship" money as soon as possible to a large U.S. city or to another country, such as Canada, England or Nigeria.
- You are receiving pay or commission to facilitate money transfers through your account.
- You responded to an email requesting you to "confirm, update or provide" your account information.

How to protect yourself:

- Contact the Bank where the check is drawn on directly by researching the contact information yourself – never call a telephone number listed on the front of the check or in a letter.
- Bring the check and any accompanying letters or emails to your Bank and ask your Banker. They are very familiar with many fraud schemes and want to help protect you from fraud.
- Be wary of any checks received where you are requested to not tell anyone about the check received or about your "good fortune".
- In a legitimate lottery you will never be asked to pay the taxes up front in order to collect your winnings.
- Ask yourself why someone would send you a check unsolicited. If it sounds too good to be true it probably is!!

If you think your account information has been compromised or that you are a victim of a fraud, please contact Westfield Bank immediately at 1-413-568-1911.