

Crime Prevention & Safety - At Home

Close the door on fraud!

Your home is your haven, but it can also expose you to hazards and fraud schemes that can be easily avoided. Generally, people believe it cannot happen to them. Con artists are clever actors appearing friendly and trustworthy and they can easily fool you. The con artist is usually a stranger and will approach when you are alone. If they offer you something that sounds too good to be true, it probably is.



General Tips

- Never open the door to someone you don't know – install and use a peephole and ask for identification. If they are legitimate, they won't mind.
- If a stranger asks to use your telephone, offer to place the call yourself. Never let a stranger into your home.
- Never give up personal information to people you don't know.
- Never give cheques to people you don't know.
- Never give out blank cheques, deposit slips or account information to anyone you don't know.
- Never give your ATM card and PIN code to anyone you don't completely trust.
- Never sign anything you don't completely and fully understand.

Close the Door on Fraud



Home Renovation Scams

Beware of anyone soliciting work to be done to your home if you haven't called for in advance. People pose as contractors, selling repairs that are overpriced, unnecessary and that can actually damage your home. Check out home improvement offers before giving a deposit or signing a contract.

Tips

- Shop around and get at least three estimates.
- Review the contract. Look for an itemized list of work and materials, start and finish dates, and deposit requests.
- Ask for local references and check them out.
- Never sign a document you don't completely and fully understand.
- Find a trusted friend or neighbour to figure out what repair work your home may need, and only employ a licensed and reputable contractor to do it.
- Say NO right away to high-pressure appeals.
- If you feel you have been cheated, or are being threatened, call your lawyer or the police.

Reputable companies will be happy to give you time to think about their services before signing.

Charity Scams

Before you give money to a charity at the door:

- Do not give cash donations. If you want to donate, write a cheque payable to the charity.
- Say NO right away to high pressure appeals.
- If someone is selling a product on behalf of a charity, ask how much of the purchase price actually goes toward the charity.
- Check with the Better Business Bureau to find out if the charity is authorized to solicit funds.

Reputable charities and fund raisers will give you time to think about making a donation.