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CHIEF OF POLICE

## UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

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**SCAM  
ALERTS**  
don't get scammed

The Upper Merion Township Police Department has received information that area residents are again being targeted by several scams. The first scam is a "Lottery" scam and you are informed (by mail or telephone) that you have won a lottery or sweepstakes. However, in order to collect your prize you must first pay handling costs or taxes. These costs are usually requested to be paid via "Western Union" or "Money Gram" and may be destined to another country. These scams may also include an authentic-looking check which has been enclosed to help pay for a "Clearance Fee" or "Tax". When you attempt to cash the check it is found to be counterfeit. Any money which you have sent is lost forever. Another version of this scam, they will ask you for your banking information and social security number. **NEVER GIVE YOUR PRIVATE INFORMATION TO ANYONE ESPECIALLY OVER THE PHONE.**

Trust your instincts! Two good rules of thumb to remember are "you should never have to pay money to collect money" and "if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is!"

Another scam that is becoming more frequent is the "Arrested/Injured Grandchild" scam. The caller identifies him/herself as your grandchild stating that they either have been arrested or are in a hospital in Canada. The caller requests that a "Money Gram" be sent to them as they need it to post bail or to pay a hospital bill. The caller may also ask you to not contact their parents regarding this situation as they are either embarrassed or don't want to alarm them. Again, if any money is sent it will probably be lost. So please check into the situation before sending any money.

Residents also need to be aware that "Driveway Sealing" scams are also increasing. A contractor will usually come to their home stating that he just did job nearby; he has material left over and can seal their driveway for a reduced price. If the homeowner accepts this offer the contractor will use a substandard product that initially appears as if the job was done correctly but either never dries or washes away with the first rainfall. These contractors are not properly registered and travel from town to town so getting your money back or having this issue resolved is almost impossible.

If any resident has information regarding the scams, please contact the Upper Merion Police Criminal Investigations Division at: 610-265-3232.