

News Release

Canadians need to strike back in fight against fraud

Fraud: Recognize It. Report It. Stop It.

OTTAWA, March 1, 2007 -- Canadians need to be more vigilant in the fight against fraud, senior law enforcement and government officials are warning.

“Sophisticated scams are being invented daily. Whether it’s Internet or mail fraud, deceptive telemarketing or identity theft, fraud is a serious problem,” said Competition Commissioner Sheridan Scott. “It can steal Canadians’ money, their identity and even their self-respect. Law enforcement agencies cannot investigate, press charges and prosecute scamsters unless Canadians help us by reporting these crimes.”

The Fraud Prevention Forum encourages consumers during Fraud Prevention Month and throughout the year to recognize the signs, report them to the authorities and stop fraud.

“All of us -- individuals, businesses and government -- share a responsibility to work harder to stop the explosion of identity theft,” said Jennifer Stoddart, Privacy Commissioner. “This costly crime claims thousands of victims each year. The theft of someone's identity may be the ultimate invasion of privacy.”

Throughout Fraud Prevention Month, Forum members will participate in a number of activities across the country, including Scam Jams, which are anti-fraud events hosted by Better Business Bureaus, and the Second Annual Fraud Prevention Community Shred, a one-day shredding event in 20 cities across Canada on March 31.

“We know Canadians are very concerned about fraud and how they can protect themselves,” said RCMP Assistant Commissioner Raf Souccar. “We also know that education just might be our single strongest weapon against fraud. All citizens have a responsibility to educate themselves. This means taking fraud seriously, and learning to recognize fraudulent activity. It also means reporting instances of fraud to the authorities.”

Each year, thousands of Canadians fall victim to fraud, which undermines consumer confidence and drains billions of dollars from the economy.

“The damage from economic crimes may extend far beyond the financial loss incurred by the immediate victim. These crimes undermine the financial health of our entire country. When you learn to spot and report counterfeit money, marketing scams, and other forms of fraud, you do more than protect yourself: you foil criminals and help ensure a safe marketplace for all Canadians,” said David Dodge, Governor, Bank of Canada.

The Fraud Prevention Forum, which is chaired by the Competition Bureau, is a concerned group of private sector firms, consumer and volunteer groups, and government and law enforcement agencies committed to fighting fraud aimed at consumers and businesses.

If a scam artist contacts you, or if you’ve been defrauded, call PhoneBusters, the Canadian Anti-Fraud Call Centre, at 1-888-495-8501.

For a complete list of Fraud Prevention Forum partners or a list of Tips to Protect Yourself from Fraud, please visit www.competitionbureau.gc.ca/fraud.

For more information, please contact:

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