

BEWARE OF TAXI FRAUD SCAM: POLICE

Halton police are warning all residents of a fake taxi scam, which occurred three times in Halton over one weekend recently.

The fraud typically involves two suspects, one acting as a taxi driver and the other acting as a customer.

The fake driver will refuse to accept cash for the fare from the fake customer, who will then prey on unsuspecting individuals nearby, asking them to use their debit card to pay the fare in exchange for cash, which will be given to the victim at the time.

The intent is to draw the victim to the cab where the fake driver presents a point-of-sale machine to the victim, their debit card

is either swiped or inserted, and the PIN number covertly obtained by the suspects.

The victim is then distracted by the suspect playing the role of customer, at which point the driver switches debit cards, keeping the victim's card and returning a different one.

The stolen card is then used by the suspects to withdraw money and/or make purchases, said police.

Police say this scam has been occurring throughout the province for some time.

Police remind the public that taxis do and will accept cash; never give your debit or credit card to someone else; when mak-

ing a purchase, attempt to conceal your PIN; note the point-of-sale machine when making a purchase and if you suspect it has been tampered with, choose another payment method, and if you believe you are the victim of a scam, contact police immediately.

Anyone with information in regard to these incidents, or anyone who has information about similar incidents, is asked to contact the Fraud Intake Line at 905-825-4777, ext. 8741.

Tips can also be submitted anonymously to Crime Stoppers. "See something? Hear something? Know something? Contact Crime Stoppers" at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS) or through the web at www.haltoncrimestoppers.ca.



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REGION MAINTAINS TRIPLE-A CREDIT RATING

Halton remains financially sound.

So says S&P Global Ratings (S&P), which after completing its annual review maintained its highest rating of AAA for the region.

The rating and annual review attributed a stable outlook for Halton, indicating confidence in its ability to uphold this standing into the future, despite negative impacts from COVID-19.

"This top credit rating will allow us to support on-

going investments in infrastructure while ensuring top value for taxpayer dollars," said Halton Regional Chair Gary Carr. "These investments are part of the essential regional programs that keep Halton a great place to live."

By upholding this top credit rating, Halton and its local municipalities have continued access to the best capital financing rates available. This minimizes long-term infrastructure capital financing costs, allowing public funds to go further when invested in regional works that help improve essential services in the community, such as road, water and wastewater projects.

S&P's analysis included the following strengths in support of the AAA rating:

- steady population growth, high income levels, and a broad economy foster stability in the Region's property tax base despite the negative impact from the COVID-19 pandemic;

- strong provincial and federal emergency support to cover the pandemic's financial impact;

- prudent financial management practices, robust long range planning guided by detailed asset management plans and diverse economic base;

- solid budgetary performance and limiting debt issuance; and

- exceptional liquidity position and satisfactory access to external liquidity for financing needs.

Halton has maintained top credit ratings from S&P Global Ratings (AAA) since 2002 and Moody's Investors Service (AAA) since 1989.

To learn more about regional finances, visit halton.ca.

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