

AWARENESS CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED AMID 'GRANDPARENT' SCAM SURGE

Halton police have launched a new campaign to raise awareness following an increase in "emergency" or "grandparent" scams across the region.

Officers said a poster designed to warn potential victims will soon be on display at most major banks in Halton.

The poster outlines some of the common scenarios fraudsters use to convince people to give them money.

The emergency or grandparent scam typically involves a targeted person receiving an unsolicited phone call about a loved one who is in trouble.

The perpetrators may pretend to be the loved one, or they may impersonate a police officer and/or other members of the criminal justice system (lawyer, bailiff, bondsman, for example), and falsely claim the

loved one is in police custody as a result of something like an impaired driving accident.

The fraudster then requests a large amount of money to have the loved one released from custody, or to pay for associated bills/fines accrued as a result of the alleged incident.

The funds requested can be in the form of a direct cash payment, bank transfers, various gift cards, and digital currency.

The scammers may even say there is a "gag order" in place regarding the incident, to prevent the target from discussing it with anyone else.

Police said the Regional Fraud Unit has noted a recent increase in these types of scams being reported over the past couple of months and is concerned the increase may continue with the holiday season ap-

proaching.

Residents are being encouraged to take time during the holidays to speak with their older family members about this ongoing scam.

Halton police are offering residents the following tips to protect themselves from these types of scams:

- Attempt to verify the caller's identity — do not volunteer any information, and ask very specific probing questions about the caller.

- Request to call back the initial caller — then independently find the number of the police service (or other purported agency in question) and call them directly to clarify the situation. If unsure, call your local police service and ask them for assistance.

- Attempt to directly call the loved one in question and clarify the matter with

them.

Police are reminding residents that these fraudsters are counting on a person's goodwill to make them act quickly to help their loved one.

Officers ask that residents take their time and use the previously mentioned tips to protect themselves.

Additional information on frauds and scams can be found at <https://www.haltonpolice.ca/en/staying-safe/frauds-and-scams.aspx> or at <https://www.antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca/index-eng.htm>.

MORE ONLINE

SIGN UP FOR OUR WEEKLY NEWSLETTER AT THEIFPCA

ARE YOU THE VICTIM OF A SCAM?



Did a family member recently call you because they were arrested?

Did the person on the phone mention something about:

Did a lawyer or police officer tell you to withdraw cash to pay a loved one's bail?

- Someone arrested for impaired driving?
- Someone arrested for drugs?
- A car accident?

Were you told to put the cash in an envelope and wait for a courier to pick it up?

- Finding a gun in the car?
- A pregnant woman?
- A gag order?

Fraudsters are using these stressful situations to convince you to give them money.

Halton police image

Halton police will display this poster in major Halton banks in an effort to educate potential victims about "emergency" and "grandparent" scams making the rounds in the region.

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