



Sioux County Sheriff's Office
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21 Ways to avoid being scammed

1. An old cliché that has been around for a long time: If it seems too good to be true, it probably is.
2. Be cautious of unsolicited e-mails and phone calls -- many are fraudulent.
3. Be wary of anyone who asks for personal information. Do not give out any information to a person, business or Web site you have not verified with a reputable source.
4. Your Social Security number should not be necessary unless you're applying for credit. Do not give it out.
5. Be suspicious of anyone who contacts you and claims to be from a company with whom you have an account like a bank, credit card or phone company. If they ask for information that the business already has, do not give it to them.
6. Do not respond to offers that demand you act immediately or won't take "no" for an answer.
7. Legitimate charitable causes do not need to telephone or e-mail to solicit donations or obtain passwords or Social Security numbers to accept donations. Do not respond to these offers or pleas for help.
8. Search online for scams, you'll usually find a good description about the exact phone call or email you've received.
9. E-mail addresses or Web addresses that have a company name in the address are not necessarily from that company. Go to the official Web site for contact information.
10. Do not open e-mail attachments from unfamiliar sources. They could contain malicious programs designed to steal your personal information.
11. Watch out for pop-up windows asking you to enter in financial data. Legitimate companies won't require you to submit sensitive information this way.
12. Don't fall for "Get Rich Fast" schemes.
13. Never allow strangers inside your home.
14. Be wary of any unexpected contact with strangers (in person or on the telephone).
15. Always be suspicious of "Door to Door" sales solicitations.
16. Beware of unsolicited home repairmen. If you need the services of a home repairman, check first with the city building officials to confirm they are legitimate. Be suspicious of anyone knocking at your door asking to make repairs to your home and/or asking to pave or seal your driveway.
17. Ask for references and call them. Get several repair estimates and compare prices.
18. Talk with a trusted friend or relative before making major money decisions.
19. Be suspicious of high pressure sales tactics.
20. Be sure the work is completed to your satisfaction before you make final payment. Require a guarantee on the work.
21. Never sign any contract or agreement without carefully checking it. Be sure you understand and agree to all provisions in a contract or agreement.