

“There is a new version of an old scam washing up on the shores of Fort Belvoir. As always, a bit of common sense should keep you safe from most criminals, but to help drive the point home, please remember - if you have not purchased a lottery ticket, you cannot win a lottery prize. There are no rich bank executives / royal family members / exiled government officials in Nigeria (or any other part of the world) that need a trusted friend to help them move money to the United States. The rule on this planet is that NO ONE IS GIVING AWAY MONEY.

The new lottery scam uses a very authentic looking but very FAKE Money Order to lure in the unsuspecting. Remember, if you have not purchased a lottery ticket, you cannot win a lottery prize. This is true in the United States and every other county in the world. This is true even if you receive apparently legitimate money orders or personal checks from someone who tells you that you have won money.

Here’s the scam – you receive a letter from an individual or a Lottery company, which includes a Money Order or Check for a large sum of money – usually about \$900-\$1000.

The letter informs you that you have won a large cash lottery prize, (and you **should** be thinking, “...but I didn’t enter a Lottery”...). The letter tells you that in order to claim your prize, you first need to pay a tax or a fee in order to collect the truckloads of money that you have just won. (Again, a clear indicator that you are dealing with a criminal is that you need to send money to get money.) The letter even includes a (bogus) Money Order or Check for \$900-\$1000 to cover the fee or tax. You are asked to cash the check, and wire the money back by Western Union or Money Gram to an agent of the lottery.

Never attempt to cash such money orders or personal checks because when they bounce, you will be liable to the bank for the money you received.

Also, it is a crime to attempt to cash such money orders or personal checks when you should know them to be frauds, which all of these are.

If you attempt to cash the Money Order or Check, you will probably have committed a crime.

If a bank mistakenly pays you for the Money Order or Check, **you will be required to repay every penny to the bank that was duped.**

If you then send the money to the criminal posing as an agent for the fictional lottery, you have been doubly-scammed, and will never see the money again.

Here is a link to a website created by the bank on which the fake checks are (not) drawn:
http://www.cnbank.com/news_detail.asp?newsid=1315

Report all scams to your command, your legal assistance office, the FTC and your local police agency.”