

# “Sweepstakes” Scams



## Have you receive a call like this?

"Congratulations, you have just won a million dollars and a car! All we need is a credit card verification number, a small handling fee, and the prize is yours!"

## Facts

- Complaints about sweepstakes have been the #1 complaint on the ND Attorney General's Top 10 Consumer Complaint List two years in a row.
- Legitimate lotteries and sweepstakes do NOT require winners to provide payment in order to receive winnings.

## How to Spot a Scam

- You are required to pay (even a small amount) for the prize
- Sweepstakes scams often use free e-mail accounts (i.e. Hotmail, yahoo, etc.)
- You “win” a contest that you didn’t enter.
- Instruct you to wire money or act in a hurry
- Require bank or credit card information to receive your “prize”
- Can pose as government organizations such as the FTC or the “National Sweepstakes Board” (which doesn’t exist)

## DON'T!

- **DON'T** send money via MoneyGram, Greendot, Western Union at the request of a solicitor, especially to a non-US location.
- **DON'T** be intimidated by the person calling. They often will threaten or use foul language to coerce you into sending money.
- **DON'T** give credit card or bank numbers to collect a prize

## DO!

- **DO:** report the scam to your local Police Department and Attorney General's Office.
- **DO:** contact the company the scammer claims to be calling from (i.e. Publisher's Clearing House), and report it to their fraud division.
- **DO:** be skeptical! If an offer seems too good to be true, it probably is
- **DO:** educate yourself on current scam trends

**The Bismarck Police Department wants you to be safe. People fall victim to these types of scams every day. Don't let yourself become a victim!**

For more information on personal safety please call the Bismarck Police Department Crime Prevention section at 223-1212.