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Scam of the Week

The Scam of the Week is a scam that was actually received or reported to this office. The scam worked like this.

A person received a call at their home from a woman who said, "Hi is this "Jill," the Department of Family Services gave me your name and number to call because you give donations to people." The caller then explained that she needed money for various emergencies and that "Jill" should send her the money. She represented that the Department of Family Services referred her name. "Jill" thought that it was odd that the Department of Family Services would give out her name and that they would want her to give someone money so she hung up and went to the Department of Family Services. They had not given out her name or telephone number, ("Jill's" name was in the phone book) nor did they know anything about referring anyone for donations.

This was a scheme to defraud "Jill." If she would have sent money by electronic funds transfer, Western Union or Fed Ex the money would be long gone and neither traceable nor recoverable by the time she figured out that the Department of Family Services had nothing to do with this. She protected herself from being defrauded by talking to the local office, asking questions, hanging up and not sending any money. She also reported it to the local Department of Family Services office so that others knew about the scheme.

You can protect yourself from this type of fraud by asking yourself a few simple questions and making a few telephone calls before you send your money to someone you don't know. If they mention a government agency like the Department of Family Services look up the number in the telephone book and call the local office. In addition to this scam, I have posted many other scams on my web site at: <http://www.crookcounty.wy.gov/attorneyscamalerts&information.html>

This scammer as well as many other will be contacting all of us by telephone, letter, and email trying to take advantage of our giving spirit during Christmas time. Giving is a great thing. Rather than sending your money out of state or country to some scammer, give locally to your church or an organization in your community where you can see the good that it does for the purposes that it was intended. I know that it will be appreciated.

Sincerely,

Joseph M. Baron, Crook County & Prosecuting Attorney