



## *Regina Police Service News Release*

**For Immediate Release**

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### **ADVISORY: GRANDPARENT SCAM**

The Regina Police Service is advising members of the public, especially seniors, to be aware of a scam that has been reported other jurisdictions and has likely made its way to Regina. Police refer to it as the “Grandparent/Emergency Scam” and it involves a phone call from a person claiming to be a relative who is experiencing some type of emergency and needs money.

Typically, the caller will phone the intended victim, usually a senior citizen, and will pretend to be a niece, nephew or grandchild. The caller goes on to say he or she needs money because of some unfortunate event like a motor vehicle collision, injury or being arrested. The caller will then urge the senior to send money, using a money transfer service, like Western Union. In situations where the intended victim starts to ask questions, the suspect hangs up. In other jurisdictions there have been reports where the caller pretends to be a concerned third party (lawyer, doctor) calling on behalf of the relative who has just been in an accident or has fallen victim to some other unfortunate event. The Regina Police Service has had reports from three seniors indicating that they have been asked for amounts ranging from \$1800 to \$4100. So far, no one reporting to police has fallen victim to this scam. At this time, it appears seniors are being specifically targeted, but it is not clear how the suspects access potential victims’ phone numbers. It is also possible that this type of scam is being attempted through e-mail, with information gleaned from social networking profiles.

(more)

Here are some ways people can protect themselves if they are called by someone claiming to be a family member and claiming to need money in a hurry:

- Ask questions of the caller that only a family member would be able to answer,
- Don't provide the caller with any personal financial information like credit card or banking information;
- Call other family members or friends to try to confirm the authenticity of the call;
- Resist making bad decisions because you feel pressure or guilt from the caller's words;
- Question why you are the one being contacted. The suspect may state they did not contact parents because they feel embarrassed. Recognize that this can be a pressure or guilt tactic.

Anyone who has fallen victim to such a scam should contact police. Anyone who has received such a call, but has not sent money, may make a report to police for informational purposes. Anyone who has information that could assist in apprehending suspects should contact the Regina Police Service at 777-6500 or call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).

**Distribution:**

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