

# EL CENTRO POLICE DEPARTMENT

## PRESS RELEASE

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For More Information Contact: Nicole Kenagy, ECPD Crime Prevention (337-4517)

### FOREIGN LOTTERIES & SWEEPSTAKE SCAMS

The El Centro Police Department has recently had an influx in complaints about “Junk Mail” scams. Unfortunately many of these scams tend to be focused on senior citizens and usually look legitimate. The envelopes typically contain letters of promised fortunes to come, and/or fake checks made out to the individual with various amounts; some for vary large sums of money.

It is not unusual for a disclaimer or notice to be printed in small letters that “no purchases are necessary for you to sign up to win”, however the literature will almost always solicit you to buy something (such as magazine subscriptions).

Many common scams will indicate that you are the winner of a foreign lottery or sweepstakes for which you did not sign up for. Maybe you haven’t even been to the country of which you supposedly “won” their lottery. It is not unusual for the scam letter to encourage their recipients to cash the checks quickly, or risk having the check voided by a certain date. Do not cash these checks, and do not reply. If a false check is cashed, it is *possible* that you will be held responsible for reimbursing the bank. **BEWARE, THESE ARE SCAMS.**

If you are wondering if there is a way, or registry to stop these as well as *other* forms of solicitations, this is your lucky day! While these registries will not completely stop solicitations, they should dramatically decrease within a three-month period.

#### **Junk Mail:**

The Direct Marketing Association’s Mail Preference Service lets you opt out of receiving direct mail marketing from many national companies for 5 years. However, your registration will not stop mailing from organizations that are not registered with the service.

Contact: [www.dmaconsumers.org](http://www.dmaconsumers.org) or send your letter to:

Direct Marketing Association

Mail Preference Service

P.O. Box 643

Carmel NY 10512

Write: “I request to have my name removed from your marketing lists”. Then, provide your full name (or the name of which your mail is sent to you in), your current mailing address, and/or your previous mailing address (especially if you have moved in the last 6 months).