



NEWS RELEASE

Marty J. Jackley
South Dakota Attorney General

Charles McGuigan
Chief Deputy Attorney General

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CONTACT: Sara Rabern (605)773-3215

Attorney General Jackley Warns Consumers of Sweepstakes Scams

PIERRE, S.D.- Attorney General Marty Jackley is warning South Dakota consumers to be cautious of sweepstakes solicitations that continue to plague the state.

Here are a few warning signs of the typical sweepstakes scam:

1. **Sweepstakes Scams Require You Pay to Receive the Prize-** Legitimate sweepstakes will rarely ask you to pay fees to participate or to receive a prize. You should rarely have to pay handling charges, service fees, or any other kind of charges up front to receive a win.
2. **Sweepstakes Scams Tell You You've Won -** You can only win sweepstakes that you enter.
3. **Sweepstakes Scams Send You a Large Check with your Notification-** To fool people into thinking that a sweepstakes scam is legitimate, many con artists send fake checks along with their phony win notifications. Cashing fraudulent checks is a crime, and you could be liable for fines and even closure of your bank account, as well as losing any money you wire.
4. **Sweepstakes Scams Instruct You to Wire Money-** Criminals use wire services to receive funds, because it is nearly impossible to trace who received the money.
5. **Sweepstakes Scams Pressure You to Act in a Hurry-** Sweepstakes scammers have a very good reason for wanting you to act quickly: they want to ensure that they receive their money before their check bounces or you read an article like this one and realize that you are being defrauded.
6. **Sweepstakes Scams Require Bank or Credit Card Info to Receive Your Prize-** Legitimate sweepstakes do not send wins by direct deposit, nor do they need to withdraw money from your bank or verify information using your credit card number.
7. **The "Win" is From a Lottery-** It is impossible to win a lottery without buying a ticket. It is illegal to sell tickets for foreign lotteries across international borders.
8. **Sweepstakes Scams Often Don't Use Your Name-** Especially in the case of email win notifications, many sweepstakes scams send thousands upon thousands of fake emails to every address they can get their hands on - often without knowing the name of the people they're contacting. If your win notice has a generic salutation like "Dear Sir" it's a good indication that it's a sweepstakes scam.

9. **Sweepstakes Scams Can Pose As Government Organizations-** To appear more legitimate, some sweepstakes scams pretend to come from government organizations such as the FTC or the "National Sweepstakes Board" (which doesn't actually exist).
10. **Sweepstakes Scams Contain Many Typos-** Glaring errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation should be a red flag for consumers.

If you have been a victim of this scam or would like additional information contact the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division as 1-800-300-1986 or consumerhelp@state.sd.us.