



OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF SHASTA

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COMPANION LIFE MAIL SCAM ALERT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Redding - The Shasta County District Attorney's Office has been apprised of a new mail fraud scam.

The victim will receive a letter from CUSTOMERS REWARD PROGRAM, 890 Gula Drive, East Hampton, MA, telephone number of (647) 839-0134. The letter will inform the victim he/she is a lucky winner in the CUSTOMER REWARD DRAW organized for all customers of Wal-Mart, Sears, Home Depot, Walgreen, Target, Macys, JC Penny, Rite Aid, etc. and held on November 2, 2011. The letter will tell the victim he/she has been selected to receive a lump sum of \$62,000.00. The letter will direct the victim to call the provided telephone number for instructions on how to claim the reward award.

The letter will direct the victim to deposit an attached \$3,686.00 check from Companion Life into their checking account for the non-resident government service tax. When the check clears the bank, the scammer directs the victim to send \$2,998.80 by Western Union or Money Gram for the government service tax. Upon confirmation the government service tax has been paid, a certified check in the amount of \$62,000.00 will be sent to the victim.

This is a scam and one that is many decades old. History shows the scammer will send the victim a check and ask the victim to deposit it into their checking account. Once the check clears the bank, the scammer will tell the victim too much money was provided and for the victim to send back the difference through Western Union. When the bank receives notice from the depository that allegedly wrote the check, it will be told the check was counterfeit. Now the victim is out the money that was sent through Western Union and any bank fee charges that may occur.

In the past, banks would just clear these checks leaving the account holder out several thousand dollars once it came back as a fraudulent check. Banks are now catching these on a more regular basis.

The Shasta County District Attorney's Office has contacted Companion Life and was told the check is counterfeit. According to Companion Life, about two weeks ago they began receiving complaints of this scam. Companion Life has requested that victims of this scam forward their counterfeit check to their office to void it. The counterfeit check can be mailed to Companion Life, P.O. Box 100102, Columbia, SC 29202.
