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Employment/counterfeit cheque scam defrauds business of $5k

On February 14, 2021, the Caledon Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) received a report of an employment/counterfeit cheque scam.

The victim reported finding employment online for a legitimate organization based out of Toronto. All correspondence was performed by email and the interview was conducted by ways of an online survey. Since it was a ?work from home? position, the organization offered to purchase the required office furniture.

The victim received an invoice for just under $5,000 for furniture from what appeared to be a legitimate furniture company based out of Quebec. An email cheque was sent to the victim for the same amount as a form of reimbursement. Since no elements of the transaction seemed suspicious at the time, the furniture was then paid for by sending two separate e-transfers to two different Gmail accounts.

The bank later informed the victim that the cheque received by email did not go through. As a result, the funds used to purchase the furniture were lost, and no office furniture was purchased.

A call to the organization believed to have been hired from revealed that this was a scam. The correspondence did not come from them.

The Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre's website (https://www.antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca) contains information on various scams. In this specific situation, a counterfeit cheque was used to obtain funds from the victim.

Caledon OPP would like to remind everyone that scammers use tactics to make their requests appear legitimate. Always verify the information by contacting organizations directly at the coordinates provided on official websites.

? Unsolicited phone calls, emails, texts or mail.

? Interactions that are coerced, threatening, or involving conversations that you are told not to discuss with anyone.

? Payments or money transactions that are requested in the form of cryptocurrency, money transfer or gift cards.

? Government agencies notifying you of payments via text message.

? The use of free web-based email accounts

And remember:

? If something seems too good to be true, it probably is.

? Hang up the phone, delete an email or text if you think it's a scam.

? Research sellers and websites before making purchases or donation's.

? Don't let anyone pressure you into providing personal information.