



# ***SCAM ALERT!***

A Consumer Update from  
**Mat Heck, Jr.**  
Prosecuting Attorney



Dayton-Montgomery County Courts Building, P.O. Box 972, 301 W. Third St., Dayton, OH 45422 (937) 225-5757

## **DON'T GET SCAMMED WHILE SHOPPING OR SELLING ONLINE FOR THE HOLIDAYS**

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With the holidays fast approaching, many people are shopping or selling online for convenience, variety or just to avoid the crowded stores. Online scammers are hoping to take advantage of these shoppers. Here are some ways to avoid having your money or your identity stolen while shopping or selling online.

- If you are selling an item online, **DO NOT** accept a check for an item for more than the asking price. It is probably a scam. These individuals will often request that you send money back to them for the amount over your asking price. The check that you received from them is probably fraudulent and will bounce. And any money you sent back will be lost. Do not ship the item or refund any overpayments until the check you receive has cleared your bank.
- Never wire-transfer money in order to make a purchase online. You may never receive your item and your money is now lost.
- When ordering an item online with a credit or debit card, make sure the website is marked as "https" rather than just "http". The "s" at the end means it is a secure website and is much safer for you to input your credit or debit card information. If it is only an "http" site, you may be scammed or your identity may be stolen.

Use these tips to have a safe and wonderful holiday season.

The above ALERT is part of the Montgomery County Prosecuting Attorney's initiative to help citizens become aware of ways they can avoid becoming a victim, or ways they can help stop criminal activity that may be occurring. Upon request, the office can provide presentations on crime prevention actions and activities to halt crime and increase the quality of life in our community.

If you would like additional information on the above ALERT, or would like additional information regarding our programs to assist consumers in general and/or seniors in particular, please contact Kimberly Oliver, Supervising Attorney, Adult Protection Unit, or Ward Barrentine, Supervising Attorney, Fraud and Economic Crimes Unit at 937-225-5757.

If you would like us to send *SCAM ALERT* updates to you electronically, please send your e-mail address to: [newsletter@mcpc.com](mailto:newsletter@mcpc.com) to be added to our distribution list.

