



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### **Community Members Should be Aware of Ongoing Scams**

**Bainbridge Island, Wash.**, (February, 2017) – The Bainbridge Island Police Department (BIPD) wants to make sure that residents are aware of the most recent scams impacting our community.

**The Grant Money Scam:** This scam comes in many forms ranging from an ad that claims you will qualify to receive a “free grant” to pay for items such as education costs, home repairs, home business expenses, etc., or a phone call supposedly from a “government” agency or some other organization with an official sounding name. In either case, the claim is the same: your application for a grant is guaranteed to be accepted, and you’ll never have to pay the money back.

**The “Send Bail Money” or “I’m in Trouble” Scam:** This is a very common scam where scammers call and represent themselves as a loved one, (child, grandchild, etc.). The scammer states that they’re in trouble with the police or are in jail and in need of money. The scammers usually ask to have the money wired, often through a money transfer company such as Western Union, and then have you call them back with a tracking number. Once they know they can get money from their victim, they will usually attempt to get them to send more.

**Police Department Donation Scam:** The BIPD has received reports of community members receiving phone calls from an individual stating that they’re an officer with the Bainbridge Island Police Department and that they’re collecting donations in support of the department. **The Bainbridge Island Police Department will never call to solicit donations!**

**Identity Theft:** Identity theft continues to be an ongoing problem across the nation. To become less vulnerable to becoming a victim of identity theft, we suggest that you take the following three preventative steps: 1) Check your mailbox daily. 2) Get a locking mailbox. 3) Check your credit yearly. If you get any credit cards in the mail saying “*your application has been approved!*,” it could indicate that your credit has been compromised.

**IRS Scam:** The Internal Revenue Service has warned consumers about a sophisticated phone scam targeting taxpayers. Victims are told that they owe money to the IRS that must be paid promptly through a pre-loaded debit card or wire transfer. If the victim refuses to cooperate, they are then threatened with arrest, deportation or suspension of a business or driver’s license. In many cases, the caller becomes hostile and insulting. With tax season upon us, this scam is sure to come up again.

**Puget Sound Energy Scam:** Puget Sound Energy (PSE) has received reports of three types of scams impacting their customers. 1) Scammers going door-to-door offering to restore power for a fee, or asking if your power is out. This is NOT something PSE workers would do. 2) Phone calls using “spoofing technology” that displays Puget Sound Energy’s name and phone number when they call to threaten disconnection of service—usually within 30 minutes—if immediate payment is not made with a prepaid debit or money card. 3) A caller, falsely claiming to be from Puget Sound Energy, leaves a message to call back a number, usually an unfamiliar 1-800 or area code number.

Customers with concerns about a call to pay their bill should hang up and dial PSE directly at 1-888-225-5773 by looking up the phone number on PSE.com or on their PSE bill

If you give any money or divulge personal information to a scammer, please contact your local law enforcement agency. If you live in Kitsap County, law enforcement is reached by calling 911. You can also file a report online at [www.kitsap911.org](http://www.kitsap911.org).

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