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MEDIA RELEASE

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Internet and Conventional Mail Cheque Scams Still Widespread

The Niagara Regional Police Service continues to receive complaints in relation to fraudulent cheques and cheque scams that are originating from the Internet and conventional mail. These fraudulent cheques are frequently being sent to individuals after they have responded to unsolicited e-mails and/or regular mail. The cheques are also being sent to potential victims without any prior contact with the suspect or any type of solicitation.

Often the e-mails or regular mail refers to some sort of employment, inheritance, lottery, or a request to assist someone transfer money to another country. Local businesses and financial institutions are continuing to be victimized as clients try to cash fraudulent cheques.

Financial Institutions do not absorb client's mistakes when they cash fraudulent cheques in their accounts. Also, there are no time limits set for how long it takes for the financial institution to determine if the cheque is fraudulent. When it is determined that the cheque is a fraud, police investigation frequently reveals that the cheque was stolen and altered or a forgery. It is a criminal offence to utter a fraudulent cheque.

The Niagara Regional Police Service would like to remind citizens to be cautious when dealing with these requests and remember that if it sounds too good to be true, it should be questioned. These suspicious requests, offers of employment, or offers of financial reward should be deleted and ignored completely. Police are fully aware of these scams and continue to monitor them.

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