



BC Crime Prevention Association

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

‘Tis the season to give . . . wisely

Burnaby, November 12 2007: The BC Crime Prevention Association would like to remind the general public about the potential for fraudulent charity collections over the Christmas period and offers advice on how to ensure donations get into the right hands.

Bogus charitable appeals happen at any time of the year but especially at Christmas when we are in the spirit of giving.

Valerie MacLean, Executive Director of the BC Crime Prevention Association, comments: “This is the time of year when fraudsters will try to cash in on the generosity of the general public during the Christmas season.” She adds: “We want to ensure that charitable donations go to legitimate charities rather than bogus ones.”

Here are some typical scenarios and techniques used by fraudsters to exploit the good work done by charities:

- Using the name of a legitimate charity, going door-to-door or telephoning asking residents to donate. This is referred to as the “look-alike, sound-alike” charity scam.
- Capitalizing on current events by either going door-to-door or telephoning the general public claiming to be collecting on behalf of victims of well publicized local and recent tragedies such as a house fire or flood in which the victims lost all their belongings.
- Using gut-wrenching stories of terrible hardship and impending disaster to manipulate donors into giving without doing their due diligence. This is the “sympathy ploy” used to separate donors from their money.

The BC Crime Prevention Association offers the following tips for safe donations:

- Don’t give over the telephone; it is almost impossible to verify that the caller is calling on behalf of a legitimate charity. And NEVER give out financial information like your credit card number in response to any kind of telephone solicitation.
- Never give in response to an email solicitation; legitimate charities do not solicit in this way; just delete the email.
- If you are solicited at your door, ask the fundraiser to leave information pertaining to the charity and tell him/her that you will be checking out the charity before making a decision to give.

- Find out if the charity is registered with the Canada Revenue Agency* by calling their toll-free number 1-800-267-2384 or going to its website: <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/donors/>. You can also check out how much of your money is actually going to charitable programs, rather than to fundraising, by checking with the Canada Revenue Agency.

*For more tips, watch for the Canada Revenue Agency brochure – “Be an informed donor” - and fridge magnet (“Giving to Charity”) coming to your mailbox.

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The **BC Crime Prevention Association** is an integrated team of citizens and police, dedicated to preventing crime. We provide ongoing province-wide education and awareness through our community partnerships.
www.bccpa.org

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