



# Crime Watch

## Protecting Senior Parents

(NAPSA)—Each year, illegal telemarketing and mail fraud schemes rob consumers—often senior citizens—of their hard-earned life savings. The U.S. Postal Inspection Service (USPIS) urges people to discuss this issue with loved ones, particularly their parents, to help make sure that fraud doesn't hit home.



**People should regularly speak with their parents to help protect them against fraud.**

Many of the schemes that target seniors are sweepstakes, where the “winner” must pay a small processing fee in order to claim his/her “prize.” However, an increasingly common occurrence is the charity solicitation call, where people are asked to pledge money to help some seemingly worthy cause.

To help protect your family, make sure they all know the following steps to take:

- Protect your financial information. Don't ever give out credit card numbers or bank account numbers over the phone unless you initiated the phone call.

- Don't be pressured into sending money in advance. If it's a legitimate contest, you don't need to pay anything to receive your prize. In addition, if you don't remember entering a sweepstakes, it's probably best to be suspicious of a notice claiming you won.

- Get all information in writing before you agree to a purchase.

If you have been victimized, or want more information, call the Federal Trade Commission toll-free at 1-877-987-3728 or visit [www.usps.com/postalinspectors](http://www.usps.com/postalinspectors).