

Protecting Your Investments

New Campaign To Arm Investors Against Fraud

(NAPSA)—While it's common for savvy investors to research an investment before they pour money into it, in many cases, those same investors don't examine the background of the financial professional to whom they are giving their money. Unfortunately, this can leave them vulnerable to fraud.

That's the word from the U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC), which found that between 2010 and 2013, at least 30,000 investors lost more than \$1 billion due to financial fraud. Notably, the majority of these schemes involved unregistered financial professionals.

Investors who check whether or not a financial professional is properly registered or licensed can greatly reduce their chance of falling victim to a fraudulent scheme.

A New Campaign

To address this problem, the CFTC launched a new national campaign to protect consumers from financial fraud. Called CFTC SmartCheck, the campaign includes a new website that offers investors access to quick, effective tools to help them check backgrounds of financial professionals.

The website also contains a range of information for investors, including interactive videos that help illustrate how to avoid fraud.

In addition, the campaign will include advertising and special events designed to reach out to investors and encourage them to use the online tools available at the website.



Experts say investors who check a financial professional's credentials are less likely to fall victim to a fraudulent scheme.

Addressing A Serious Crime

"Financial fraud is a serious crime that harms many thousands of Americans," said Aitan Goelman, Director of CFTC's Division of Enforcement (DOE). DOE opened over 1,800 investigations between 2010 and 2014, and at any given time DOE staff is investigating over 1,000 individuals and entities.

Said Goelman, "CFTC SmartCheck arms investors with powerful tools that can help reduce incidents of fraud at key decision points."

A Commitment To Investors

"The CFTC is committed to protecting investors from fraud, and we demonstrate that commitment today with the launch of CFTC SmartCheck," said CFTC Chairman Tim Massad. "This campaign not only provides investors with a resourceful website, but will include targeted advertising and collaborative outreach with allied organizations."

Over the coming months, the CFTC SmartCheck campaign will undertake outreach efforts with other organizations aligned with the CFTC's mission to reduce financial fraud.

To learn more, visit SmartCheck.CFTC.gov.

Prepared by the CFTC.