

# Multi-Housing Crime Reduction Newsletter

for Olympia, Lacey, Tumwater and Thurston County

January 2009

## Landlord Scam

The Lewis County Sheriff's Office recently reported a long-time scam has affected landlords in the area.

Persons posing as potential residents answer ads for rental homes and apartments. They pay the fees required (first month, last month and/or deposit) with a check.

The suspect then calls the landlord before moving in and claims to have changed their mind about renting. They request the fees be returned. The landlord complies and then learns from the bank that the original check was either forged or counterfeit and the landlord is left with the loss.

Some prudent steps can help prevent you being victimized by these crooks:

- \* Check references before you accept payment.
- \* Be cautious when sending refunds for fees paid by checks, especially from out of the local area. Wait to verify the check has cleared.
- \* Report fraud to law enforcement.
- \* Be aware that scammers often request that money be wired via Western Union or similar businesses.
- \* Never give out financial information such as bank account or social security numbers.

### Contact Information:

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## Ideas for 2009 Meetings

Do you have an idea for a meeting topic or speaker? Please let us know. Here are some suggestions from the last meeting:

- Department of Health (bed bug removal, MRSA, hazardous materials disposal, mold)
- Legislative Updates
- Child Protective Services
- Gang Identification
- Fair Housing
- Dealing with criminal guest
- Resources for continuing criminal history checks
- Social Security Fraud

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## Upcoming Events



**Thursday, January 15th 12:30-1:30 PM**

Regular monthly CRMH meeting

Lacey City Hall Community Room

Civil Eviction Process

Sgt. McClendon, Thurston County Sheriff's Office

