



**MARCH 2010**

**FROM WELD COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY KENNETH R. BUCK  
FOR THE C.A.S.E. PROGRAM**

# **FRAUD ALERT!**

## **LUCKY DAY FOR WHOM?**



The odds of finding a four-leaf clover are 1 in 10,000. The odds of winning the grand prize in Powerball are 1 in 195,249,054. The odds of becoming a victim of identity theft are approximately 1 in 200.

Every day people across the country are notified that they have won the lottery. The announcement may come in the form of a letter, an email or a phone call.

Regardless of how you are informed about your “winnings,” you will undoubtedly be asked to provide at least one of two things to the con artist who has told you that today is your lucky day.

Scenario 1: You will be asked to provide your bank account information so that your winnings can be directly deposited into your account. You may also be asked to mail the con artist a relatively small fee (small in comparison to your supposed lottery winnings) to cover miscellaneous fees and taxes before the entirety of your winnings can be released to you. In either case, the thief will access, and drain, your bank account.

Scenario 2: A cashier's check will be enclosed with a letter announcing you have won the lottery. This check is meant to help you cover any fees and taxes that are due prior to your winnings being released to your account. You will be asked to deposit the check, use a certain portion to pay the fees, and then return the overage to the fraudulent company. Because the cashier's check is phony, you will have deposited a fake check worth nothing and written a personal check likely in the amount of a few hundred dollars.

If you fall victim to either scenario, you will have made the day a lucky one for the con artist.

When it comes to lotteries, remember: if you didn't buy a ticket you can't win; you never have to pay to collect your winnings, and taxes are paid only after you receive your winnings; if you hold a winning lottery ticket, you have to notify the lottery— they will not notify you; and it is illegal under U.S. Federal Law to play any foreign lottery in the United States.

**Contact your local police agency if you think you are a victim of a crime.  
To contact the Weld County District Attorney's Office, call (970) 356-4010 ext. 4702.**