

# Internet Scams Prevention Checklist

## Did you know that the Internet is a quick, easy and cheap way for scam artists to find potential victims for their investment scams?

### RECOGNIZE IT

Online fraudsters can operate anonymously from anywhere in the world, making them hard to catch and stop. There are many ways online scammers might try to entice you with an investment opportunity. Spam emails, online discussion boards, social networking websites and blog sites can be a fraudster's playground.

### CHECK IT OUT

Protect yourself from internet fraud by using this checklist:

- **Don't expect to get rich quick.** Evaluate the information you get online in the same way that you would any news magazine article, television report or "hot tip."
- **Be careful with your personal information.** It is unusual for legitimate businesses to ask for your personal information via email. Treat any such request with caution and first confirm using your own contact numbers to verify the sender and intent of the email.
- **Don't be lured by claims of "insider information".** Disclosing "insider information" to a select group of people is illegal. Beware if you see these claims when you're online.
- **Delete spam emails.** Don't reply and instead block further emails from that sender by adding them to your "blocked senders" list. You can also install anti-spam software that prevents spam emails from reaching your inbox.
- **Watch out for red flags.** Many investing websites look professional, but if there is non-relevant information or spelling/grammatical errors on the site, do more research
- **Check recent news releases and do an online search.** See if the investment, individual or company name comes up when you search it online. You might be surprised at what you find.
- **Make sure you have all the information you need to make a decision.** Consider emailing some key questions to the person offering you the investment. Get independent advice on the responses you receive.
- **Keep printed and written records of all correspondence.** This could be useful if you need to make a complaint or take future legal action.

### PREVENT IT

Stop scam artists in their tracks and help prevent others from becoming possible victims. If you've received, or have become a victim of, a fraudulent online investment opportunity, contact the Alberta Securities Commission at 1-877-355-4488 or email [inquiries@asc.ca](mailto:inquiries@asc.ca).