



NEWS RELEASE

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OCEAN CITY, MARYLAND



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For Immediate Release:

OCPD ADVISING OCEAN CITY VISITORS TO BEWARE OF INTERNET RENTAL SCAMS

The Ocean City Police Department is reminding citizens to be cautious while using the internet to search for vacation rentals in Ocean City. While popular websites can be a valuable tool in finding reasonable vacation rentals, consumers need to beware of scammers who are posing as property owners.

Some of the most consistent "red flags" associated with rental scams are demonstrated through poor grammar, spelling errors, poor capitalization and punctuation on any on-line material. In addition, if a vacation rental owner does not accept credit cards as a form of payment, they should almost always accept a personal check. Most scammers will only take cashiers checks or ask money to be wired to a specific account. Lastly, you should be cautious of a property owner who is hesitant or unwilling to provide additional information in regards to the rental property, such as amenities or photographs.

As a renter you should take additional steps to assure the owner and rentals are legitimate. There are several tips you should remember to avoid being a victim of an online rental scam. First, do not wire money to a suspected landlord and remember, regardless how convincing the tale, make sure the person renting the house to you actually owns it. Also, verify where you will go and who you will see to pick up the rental key. Make sure that the person and location is valid. Finally, if you have any suspicious concerns, follow your instinct. Even if you have to pay a fee, you are often safer dealing with a licensed real estate agent.

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Quite often, citizens' hunches turn out to be valuable information to us. If you have information that you feel we should know, we encourage you to leave us e-mail. OCPD@oceancitymd.gov
For additional public safety information, go to the Official OCPD Blog at: <http://ocpdmdinfo.blogspot.com> or view real-time public safety advisories on "Twitter" by searching OCPDMDInfo.