



and/or on the public's faith and trust concerning credit unions. As is the case with the other type of website fraud, the perpetrators will often use a domain name and web address that is either exactly or very similar to the name and address of an actual credit union.

In response to all of these fraudulent activities, the NCUA has been working with relevant supervisory and law enforcement authorities, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation. As a result, once the existence of a fraudulent advertisement or website becomes known, working together we have had success in stopping these activities. Further prevention of this type fraud, however, depends upon learning of new fraudulent advertisements and websites, and immediately acting upon this information.

Accordingly, we recommend that all federally-insured credit unions take an active role in policing this matter, including reviewing local newspapers for suspicious advertisements. Similarly, credit unions should conduct regular internet searches for entities that may be using domain names exactly like, or similar to the name of their credit union. Credit unions may also consider purchasing domain rights to such names, if available, to help prevent against misuse of their name. Further information and guidance on the use and protection of credit union websites can be found in a December 2002 NCUA Letter to Credit Unions on Protection of Credit Union Internet Addresses, No. 02-CU-16, [http://www.ncua.gov/ref/letters/letters2002\\_2000.html](http://www.ncua.gov/ref/letters/letters2002_2000.html).

Finally, if you have any information regarding any of the above mentioned activities, please call the NCUA Fraud Hotline at (703) 518-6550 or (800) 827-9650. In addition to contacting the NCUA, affected credit unions should consider filing a Suspicious Activity Report and/or directly contacting the local office of the FBI. Similarly, credit union members who have fallen victim to these scams should contact their credit union, the NCUA and/or the FBI. Moreover, to protect against further identity theft, members should also consider filing a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission, and notifying their credit bureaus. Further information and guidance on protecting against identity theft can be found at the FTC's web site, <http://www.consumer.gov/idtheft/>.

Sincerely,

/S/

Dennis Dollar  
Chairman