



POSTAL NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 2, 2009

Contact: Monica Suraci
U.S. Postal Service
(O) 202-268-6353
(C) 202-258-9521

monica.a.suraci@usps.gov

Contact: Peter Rendina
U.S. Postal Inspection Service
(O) 202-268-4909

prrendina@uspis.gov

usps.com/news

Release No. 09-023

U.S. Postal Service Celebrates National Consumer Protection Week

Organization Teaches Customers to Prevent Identity Theft and Avoid Fraudulent Schemes

WASHINGTON — U.S. Postal Service executives are marking National Consumer Protection Week by supplying consumers with tools for surviving today's economy by providing tips to prevent identity theft and by increasing awareness of fraudulent schemes.

National Consumer Protection Week, set for March 1-7, is a week of activities sponsored primarily by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to draw attention to fraud and other threats to consumers.

The U.S. Postal Service and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service play leading roles in increasing public awareness of identity theft and fraudulent mailing schemes. The organizations state that, according to the FTC, as little as 2 percent of all victims reported that the identity crimes they experienced were through the U.S. Mail. The Postal Service's commitment to protecting customers' private information was recognized for the fifth consecutive year when it was named Most Trusted Government Agency in the independent Ponemon Institute Privacy Study last month.

Delores Killete, vice president and Consumer Advocate for the Postal Service, and William Gilligan, acting Chief Postal Inspector of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, are leading the Postal Service effort this week to provide consumers with valuable information about protecting their assets from fraudulent schemes and tips on keeping their personal information safe.

"Today's challenging economy deems it critical that we give consumers tools to guard against losing their hard-earned money to fraud," Killete said.

Postal Service representatives across the country are educating consumers by distributing DVDs and brochures warning against fraudulent financial schemes, as well as by hosting information sessions and events. U.S. Postal Inspectors say consumers are still being targeted for fraudulent mailing schemes but can take steps to protect their assets.

"Spreading awareness about fraud makes a criminal's job harder. The best way for our customers to protect themselves is to learn how to avoid fraudulent schemes such as reshipping scams, fraud on the Internet and work-at-home schemes," said Chief Inspector Gilligan.

To avoid becoming a fraud victim:

- Use common sense.
- Take your time when responding to offers.
- Educate yourself about fraud.
- Know with whom you are dealing.
- Protect your personal information.
- Be skeptical of any offer that sounds too good to be true.

###

Please Note: For broadcast quality video and audio, photo stills and other media resources, visit the USPS Newsroom at www.usps.com/news.

About the U.S. Postal Service

An independent federal agency, the U.S. Postal Service is the only delivery service that reaches every address in the nation, 149 million residences, businesses and Post Office Boxes, six days a week. It has 34,000 retail locations and relies on the sale of postage, products and services, not tax dollars, to pay for operating expenses. Named the Most Trusted Government Agency five consecutive years by the Ponemon Institute, the Postal Service has annual revenue of \$75 billion and delivers nearly half the world's mail.

About the U.S. Postal Inspection Service

The U.S. Postal Inspection Service is one of the oldest federal law enforcement agencies in the country. For more than 200 years, Postal Inspectors have protected the U.S. Postal Service, secured the nation's mail system and ensured public trust in the mail. To learn more, visit <http://postalinspectors.uspis.gov/> and www.FakeChecks.org.