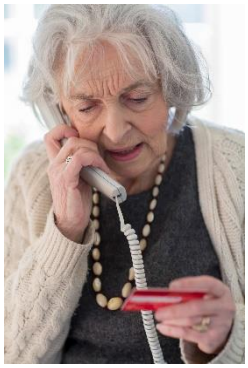
Be Wary of Where Your Donation is Going

The summer is a busy time for charities, especially those that help in the aftermath of wildfires and floods. However, charities are needed more than ever in the past year and a half due to the pandemic. Unfortunately, with the combination of the pandemic, wildfires and flooding, it is the perfect storm for fraudsters to take advantage of those looking to donate.

These scams are the worst kind - taking advantage of people's generosity and playing on their emotions. They also divert much needed funds from real charities. Scammers either pretend to be representatives of legitimate charities, or they make up their own fake organizations. They can also pretend to be individuals asking for financial support for health or other reason.

Signs the Charity May Not Be Legitimate



- You are being pressured or made to feel guilty. Legitimate charities gladly accept your donation instead of demanding it
- You have received a thank-you for a donation you didn't make, and you end up having to contact them
- They ask for a donation by cash, gift card or wire transfer
- They ask the donation to be made out to an individual instead of the "organization"
- You are not given a receipt, or details are not included on the receipt
- They may attach a legitimate organization's name to their scam; however, their website, email or letter doesn't match up or seems suspicious

How to Safely Donate

- Ask for details - full organization name, address, registration information, how the donation is spent, etc.
- Research the charity (you can see if a charity is registered on the CRA website. You can also check sites like Canada Helps or Charity Intelligence)
- Take your time to think it over and even do some research - you don't have to give right away if you are being pressured
- Don't be afraid or feel guilty to hang up the phone or delete that email if you are unsure
- Keep a record of donations
- Regularly review your accounts
- Never send money or give personal information, credit card or online account details to anyone you don't know or trust

Search for Registered Charities