

BEWARE

VACATION RENTAL SCAMS

Here's the typical scenario: a real vacation rental property is fraudulently advertised on Craigslist complete with pictures and amenity descriptions that have been hijacked from a legitimate site. A prospective renter responds to the ad and begins to communicate with the alleged "owner" via email or text. The renter is asked to make a wire transfer to a bank account that is provided or via PayPal's Friends & Family option. Once payment is received, communication with the scammer either stops or the renter is told that someone will meet them at the property with the keys upon their arrival. It is then that they learn they have been scammed.



Are you a victim of Vacation Rental Fraud in El Dorado County?

If so, please fill out the Fraud Complaint form online at www.eldoradoda.com or call the Fraud Hotline: (866) 629-0171

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◆◆ If it seems to good to be true, then it probably is! ◆◆



HELPFUL TIPS TO AVOID VACATION RENTAL SCAMS



- ◆ ***Be suspicious of ads appearing on Craigslist*** - Websites such as VRBO, Airbnb, HomeAway and Flipkey are suggested.
- ◆ ***Don't be swayed by the low price*** - It's always thrilling to find a great deal however, if it seems too good to be true, then it probably is! Compare the price with other similar listings in the area.
- ◆ ***Be Cautious of emails from a personal email address*** - If you're inquiring about a property on a vacation rental website, the email should come from that website—not something like Gmail, Yahoo, Outlook, AOL or Hotmail.
- ◆ ***Be wary of requests for unusual methods of payment*** - A payment request via wire transfer, money order, or PayPal should raise a red flag. Use your credit card on the vacation rental website.
- ◆ ***Do not release personal identifying information*** - If the person you are in contact with requests a scan of your passport, driver's license, or requests your Social Security Number for verification, **DO NOT** give it to them!
- ◆ ***Trust your instincts*** - Is the listing or the "owner's" email filled with broken English? Does something just not feel right? If so, trust your instincts.
- ◆ ***Exercise due diligence*** - Cross reference the address of the rental property and the owners name online.
- ◆ ***Report suspicious behavior*** - Contact your credit card company if you believe your charge is fraudulent.