



The Monthly Brief

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CRAIGSLIST CORNER

Continuing our series featuring some of the most common scams on Craigslist, this month we're looking at Vehicle Sales.

Crooks target popular vehicles and offer them at very low prices. The ads usually have only one or two photos, a limited description and grammar errors. Offered for sale on your local Craigslist, once you make contact the scammer claims the vehicle is actually located out of your area.

This sets up the "Out of Town Seller" scam. To justify the low price these scammers peddle a sob story like going through a divorce, are in the military or have been transferred overseas and can't take the car. Because the seller is out of the area the buyer will have to wire funds before picking up the vehicle.

If the crook senses hesitation by the buyer they offer to use 3rd party services like Escrow.com. Sounds safe right? But the crook sends the buyer a spoofed email and the transfer doesn't go to Escrow.com but into the pocket of the crook who promptly disappears.

When shopping for a vehicle on Craigslist watch for these warning signs of a scam;

- *Offered Way Below Market Price
- *Seller is overseas or out of the area
- *No Phone Number or Text Only Number
- *Escrow Service or Pick-up Agent Needed
- *Wire Funds Transfer to Another Country
- *Anxious Seller Needing Quick Payment

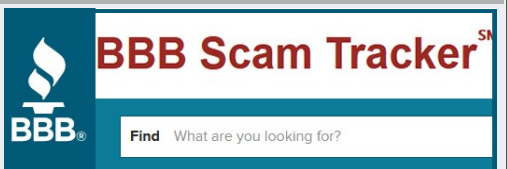
Find out more by visiting [Craigslist Scams Information Page](#)

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BBB Scam Tracker

The Better Business Bureau (BBB) has always offered consumers an opportunity to check out companies before doing business with them. Now the BBB is trying to help consumers fight back against scammers with information on the latest rip off tricks and cons with their "[Scam Tracker](#)" website.



The Scam Tracker lets consumers see what scams are currently being reported in their area by zip code or location. It includes details on what kind of scam, how it's being offered, and the dollar amount lost or sought. The site also has a search feature that lets you investigate if that suspicious email or call you have received has already been reported on the site. Finally, you can help other consumers by reporting scams and sharing details, numbers, names and companies. It's all free and no registration needed.

Learn more about scams by visiting the [BBB Scam Tips Page](#), or sign-up for Scam Alerts or other publications on the [BBB Subscription Page](#). Make the Better Business Bureau website one of your valuable resources for avoiding cyber crooks and scammers.

A FREE SERVICE FEE?



What's a Free Service Fee? That's when a company charges a fee for a service that the customer could obtain at no cost, usually from a government agency. In this case [Florida's Division of Unclaimed Property](#).

Currently the FDUP holds \$1 billion dollars in unclaimed assets mostly from old bank, insurance, utility, and trust accounts.

They also hold tangible property like coins, jewelry, stamps and other items left behind in safe deposit boxes.

Recently letters have been sent to people by a company called "State Refund Service" offering to recover unclaimed funds in exchange for a fee. Included with the notification letter is an Refund Claim Form that must be signed and notarized. Then the form, (here's the scary part) a copy of the claimant's ID, and a fee of either \$29.95 or a percentage of the total unclaimed funds, must be sent to the company for processing. Be very careful when turning your personal info over to anyone. In the wrong hands this could easily result in your identity being sold or stolen.

Anyone can search for and claim assets held by the FDUP **for free** by visiting the agency website [Florida Treasure Hunt](#). If you are contacted by someone charging a fee for free services, you can report it to Florida Attorney General at [MyFloridaLegal.com](#) or to their email address citizenservices@myfloridalegal.com