

Warren Mayor Jim Fouts Orders Creation of a Regional Task Force To Protect Seniors Against Scam Artists

“Recently, I received several calls from elderly Warren residents regarding individuals offering “special deals” to repair their driveways. These criminals have managed to “con” several senior residents and have gotten away with large amounts of cash and or valuable items.

“One 93-year-old senior was scammed out of \$7000 and another senior out of \$1500. An 85-year-old Warren resident was the recent victim of a “gypsy scam.” Still others have let people into their homes who are allegedly from the city water department claiming their basement must be checked for leaks. Then, they either ask for cash for the repair or they distract the seniors and steal valuable items from their homes. This is an outrage! A special police task force has been formed on this.

“Following my direction, the Warren Police Department is seeking officers from surrounding law enforcement agencies to participate in a cooperative law enforcement effort. By creating a multi-jurisdictional senior task force, we will work to aggressively identify, arrest, and prosecute those responsible for scam crimes.

“These crimes almost exclusively target senior citizens and elderly residents.

“If you are an elderly resident, the Warren Police Department reminds you to be skeptical of anyone who arrives at your home unannounced and claims to be:

- From any utility company telling you that there is some trouble inside your home that needs to be inspected immediately.
- An employee of any utility company telling you that you have overpaid on a prior bill and are due a refund.
- An employee of the city water department that needs to inspect or test your water. City workers will never request to enter your home without prior notification.
- A repairman who wants to repair a dangerous crack in your porch or driveway or wants to seal your roof

“Residents should always ask for identification, but these thieves are now even producing fraudulent identification that can appear legitimate, and they even wear work clothes that appear authentic.

“If anyone arrives at your door unannounced, do not let them in and dial 911 immediately to have officers verify their legitimacy. Do not open the door and do not try to engage them in conversation.

“The Warren Police Department urges all residents to remain vigilant and ever watchful for their elderly neighbors and report any suspicious activity immediately by calling 911.”