

Beware of Con Artists

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Senior citizens can be particularly vulnerable to pressure from con artists. Some live on fixed incomes and are open to suggestions on ways to extend their limited dollars. They're inclined to be polite to strangers who are friendly, and often have difficulty saying 'no' or hanging up on persistent callers. They may not want to tell anyone they've been scammed because they fear their family will think they can't handle their own affairs any more.

Volunteers with Nebraska's Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) in the Department of Health and Human Services visit senior centers, retirement communities and other organizations to educate seniors on how to recognize and ward off 'con artists.'

There are simple steps you can take to protect yourself.

- Never give out your bank account or credit card numbers.
- Get two or three written estimates for any home repairs.
- Don't be pressured into sending money for a 'free' prize or signing a contract.
- Never allow door-to-door salespeople into your home.
- Deal with reputable companies and check with your Better Business Bureaus before buying something.
- Know that some people who call about a promotion are untrustworthy.

Remember that if something sounds too good to be true, it usually is. If you or someone you know thinks they've been scammed, or to get information on being a SMP volunteer, call 1-800-942-7830 or go to www.dhhs.ne.gov/smp