Suspectfraud.com Helps Consumers "Check with the State before It's Too Late"

Local News

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OLYMPIA, March 8, 2010 – Here’s a consumer tip: check www.suspectfraud.com to avoid getting ripped off on that deal that sounds too good to be true.

In an effort to counter consumer fraud, and to give residents a way to report crooked businesses, the Department of Revenue, Department of Labor and Industries and several other agencies have established a web site, www.suspectfraud.com that allows consumers to easily check to see if a business is registered before they sign on the dotted line. The site also allows consumers to report cases of suspected fraud.

Governor Chris Gregoire has proclaimed March 7-13 as Washington Consumer Protection Week in conjunction with National Consumer Protection Week. Information on the national program is available at http://www.consumer.gov/ncpw/.

While the vast majority of businesses are fair and honest, fly-by-night roofers, movers and other con artists, many of them not even registered in the state to do business, are always out there trying to make a fast buck by doing poor jobs or gouging customers.

“Knowledge is the best defense, and state agencies have combined forces to make it easier than ever for the public to ‘check with the state before it’s too late,’” Gregoire said.

Links on www.suspectfraud.com allow consumers to check whether businesses are registered and licensed with the state and to report them if they are not. Consumers also can check to see if a registered business owes the state taxes, has had complaints filed against it, or is the subject of state enforcement actions.

Visitors also can verify the legitimacy of charity fundraisers, and report fraud involving a variety of industries, such as banks, child support, insurance, unemployment and workers’ compensation, vehicle titles, and medical services. Links also are provided to assistance for fraud victims.