

Fortune 500 Scam Information

The City of Corona has recently received numerous inquiries from citizens nationwide regarding a letter they have received in the mail. The letter claims to be from the City of Corona and is accompanied by a fictitious "City of Corona" check. The letter explains that the recipient has won a certain dollar amount from the "Fortune 500 Prize Pool". Below is an example of the letter:

"CONGRATULATIONS! We would like to notify you about the release of the fortune 500 prize pool contest results. Your name attached to sweepstakes number B5-965, with serial number 43207 drew a lucky number of 702/F2, which consequently won a sweepstake in the fortune 500 prize pool contest 2nd category. You have therefore been approved for the payment of US\$325,000.00 in cash credited to file with the ref: #9825/CC/P07. This is from a total cash prize of US\$3,250,000 shared amount Ten (10) International winners in this category. All participants were selected through a computer ballot system drawn from a pool of twenty five thousand (25,000) names from Europe, Asia, North America, Australia and Central America.

*As of now, the above payment has been forwarded to our clearing institution and insured in your name for onward remittance. To expedite the processing, enclosed is a check which serves as your initial payment. On receipt of this check, you need to call our office to validate the check and then proceed to your bank and make a deposit. You will be using some money from this first check to pay for the applicable charges, when calculated amounts to US\$7,920.00. This is to ensure there are no out-of-pocket expense applied to you. Immediately when this check clears, give us a call so we can give you the details on how to pay this **processing & handling charges**. Within 2 days of paying the charges, you will immediately receive a 2nd check for \$315,020 (i.e. \$325,000 less \$9,980.00)..... "*

The letter then instructs the recipient to contact them for further instructions.

The City of Corona wants to inform all recipients that these checks are fictitious and that this is a scam originated out of Canada. When you call the phone number provided in the letter (which happens to have a Toronto, Canada area code), you are typically instructed to deposit the check into your bank account and send the \$7,920.00 (or a portion thereof) to them via Western Union. By sending cash via Western Union, the funds can be collected instantly by the suspects from anywhere in the world and there is no way to track the transfer. Your bank will later inform you that the check you deposited was fictitious and will demand you pay them back the \$7,920.00. If you have been a recipient of this "Fortune 500 Prize Pool" letter, please contact and report this mail fraud to your local Postal Inspector and local law enforcement agency. Canadian authorities are also aware of this scam. You may contact the Canadian Anti-fraud Call Center at 1-888-495-8501.