



COUNTY OF YOLO  
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

JEFF W. REISIG, DISTRICT ATTORNEY

301 SECOND STREET - WOODLAND, CALIFORNIA 95695 - 530.666.8180 - FAX 530.666.8185

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Date:** July 20, 2016

**Contact:** Kevin Clark, Enforcement Officer  
fraud@yoloda.org

**FRAUD ALERT: Vehicle Purchase Scams**

(Woodland, CA)- July 20, 2016 – Yolo County District Attorney Jeff Reisig is warning Yolo County residents about making vehicle purchases on-line. Scammers lure individuals by posting advertisements of vehicles with prices that are considerably under market value. In addition to these low prices, the scammers often also offer to ship the vehicle to the buyer at no extra cost and ask buyers to wire them the payment for the vehicle. Buyers send the money, then they are unable to contact the “seller.” The vehicle is never delivered to them.

The scammers frequently claim that the purchase is being conducted via a third party company such as eBay or Craigslist and that eBay’s Vehicle Purchase Protection Plan applies to the sale. However, the scammers do not actually conduct the “sale” through these third party companies. The Yolo County District Attorney's Office urges you to always independently confirm the sale through the third party company and to research all information provided by the seller before buying a vehicle through eBay or Craigslist.

Be cautious of the following red flags: 1) Payment methods that require the buyer to wire money, especially through MoneyGram, Western Union or Green Dot MoneyPak cards; 2) Vehicles with considerably low price tags and sellers who offer to ship the vehicles at no extra cost; 3) Sellers who do not allow prospective buyers to inspect the vehicle in person before sending money. A common claim by the seller is that they live overseas and therefore cannot meet with the prospective buyer.

If purchasing a vehicle on eBay or Craigslist, pay by credit card whenever possible so that you can challenge the charge if necessary. Additionally, either ask to inspect the vehicle in person before sending money or consider providing the payment at the time that you pick up the vehicle. It is always wise to arrange a meeting place in a public location or at your local police department, as legitimate sellers often require you to pick up the vehicle yourself or hire a shipping company.

For more information on the steps to take when purchasing a vehicle, visit <https://www.dmv.ca.gov>. Please contact the Yolo County District Attorney for more information on scams or to report suspected scams please call 855-4-YOLO-DA or visit [www.yoloda.org](http://www.yoloda.org).

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