

SUBLET SCAM ALERT

With the increased listings of property sublets, we wanted students to be aware of something that has occurred to other students across Canada over the past few years. Students have/are being contacted by possible illegitimate subletters.

Here is a brief synopsis of their situation:

- *Sublet posted on a housing website.*
- *Student was contacted by an interested party (Global Oil and Gas Company from Nigeria etc.) via email.*
- *Individual identified themselves as the parent of an interested subletter for the unit. The parent was informing the student that they would be taking care of the bills, that they were sending payment immediately and that the student would be contacted by their accountant.*
- *If you receive what appears to be a payment for the sublet from an unknown contact, **DO NOT CASH THE CHEQUE OR MONEY TRANSFER** that may be sent particularly if it contains an overpayment and asks you to send the difference back.*

There are also variations to this scam; all seem to have the same objective. Please be aware of this scam when responding to inquiries about your listing.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Off-Campus Housing Office at 902.491.8606 and report the suspicious activity to the RCMP.

They have a national program that deals with phone and email fraud called Phone Busters. Phone Busters is the Canadian Anti-Fraud Call Centre managed on a tripartite basis by the Ontario Provincial Police, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and the Competition Bureau Canada www.phonebusters.com. The toll-free phone number for the program is 1-888-495-8501, fax 1-888-654-9426 and email: waf1@phonebusters.com.

Although these events do not happen to the majority of students that partake in subletting accommodations, it is an important to remember what can happen if you are not careful when screening applicants for a sublet.

Here are just a few notable stories of how others (non Saint Mary's University Students) have been affected by this scam:

- http://www.readingt.readingcities.com/index.php/toronto/comments/scam_city/
- <http://www.lfpress.ca/cgi-bin/publish.cgi?p=177934&s=homeseller>