

Texas Lottery Commission Press Release - February 10, 2004

Contact:

Leticia Vasquez, 512-344-5208

Karen Kalergis, 512-344-5436

Lottery's Public Awareness Campaign Saves Fort Worth Woman \$20,000

(Austin, February 10) - The Texas Lottery Commission's warnings about the Latin Lotto Scam kept a Fort Worth woman from falling victim to the con that has robbed victims of more than three million dollars. The woman, who wished to remain anonymous, called Commission officials today after she was approached by two women in a grocery store parking lot this morning.

"From what this woman told our Security officials, this was a classic case of the Latin Lotto scam," said Reagan E. Greer, Executive Director of the Texas Lottery Commission. "The two women claimed to have a winning lottery ticket that they could not cash because they were not U.S. citizens. They asked this woman for \$20,000 to help them cash the ticket and then share the prize.

"The good news is -- she didn't lose her money. When she called her husband to ask his advice, he had heard our warnings and told her she was being scammed and urged her to get away from these people."

Commission officials encouraged the woman to contact Fort Worth police, which she did.

Greer thanked the news media for the public service it is providing by publicizing the scam.

"This shows that people are getting the message -- and we're hearing reports of people getting away from these scammers, not falling victim to them," said Greer.

"The more stories like this we hear -- the closer we are to driving these scammers out of Texas. These con artists aren't going to stay in Texas if they keep running into people who won't fall for this scam."

On February 2, a Mesquite woman was bilked out of \$3,000 by two Hispanic women using the same tactics used on the Fort Worth woman today.

"What's unusual about the Mesquite case and today's incident in Fort Worth is that two women were the perpetrators," Greer said. "The scammers' mode of operation we've seen until now usually involves two men approaching the intended victim. The con artists may switch back to that again, which is one more thing to be aware of."

The Texas Lottery Commission has been running a public awareness campaign about the Latin Lotto scam since March 2002.

In addition to working with the media to distribute information, including PSA's, the agency has posted information on a special section of its Web site, and spoke about the scam at numerous senior centers around the state.

Commission security staff also conducted regional law enforcement seminars in Dallas, San Antonio, Houston and El Paso to inform area law enforcement officials about lottery-related fraud against the elderly and how best to deal with suspects and what charges to file against them.

"While our efforts to publicize the crime have proven successful in the short term the con artists lay low for a while and return to ply their trade months later," Greer said.

Since the Latin Lotto Scam is not confined to Texas, the Texas Lottery Commission has made available all its bilingual

"... a classic case of the Latin Lotto scam ..."

The Facts

- No money is EVER required to claim a prize.
- The TLC NEVER confirms that a ticket is a winner over the phone.
- You don't have to be a U.S. citizen to claim a lottery prize.

Get More Information

▶ [How the Scam Works](#)

▶ [Who Runs the Scam](#)

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informational materials -- news releases, public service announcements and flyers -- to lotteries across the country for their use.