

Texas Lottery Commission Press Release - April 8, 2004

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Texas Lottery Executive Director Warns Of Scam Now Hitting Texas

(Austin, April 8) - Texas Lottery Commission Executive Director Reagan E. Greer today warned Texans to beware of a new scam pretending to originate with the famed "El Gordo" Spanish Lottery Christmas-time game.

"Texans are being targeted by a phony group claiming to be affiliated with the Spanish Christmas Lottery known around the world as 'El Gordo,' and they require would-be victims to release bank account information in order to collect a prize," said Greer. "People need to know that if they receive official-looking documents showing a 'secured' six-figure prize won by the recipient to be aware that these are phony papers designed to lure people into giving up personal financial information. This isn't real."

This is not the only scam that attempts to make victims of Texans. The Latin *Lotto* Scam is still happening across the state. Elderly victims, mostly Hispanics, are conned out of large sums of money by Latin American scam artists selling bogus Texas Lottery® tickets.

"To date, victims in Texas have lost more than \$3 million since 1999 when the first case was reported in Houston," Greer said. "Since January, seven cases have been reported to us already, and there's no telling how many more have gone unreported."

Greer advises Texans to look with a skeptical eye at any unsolicited deal that's offered to them, especially if it concerns a lottery ticket.

"I urge Texans to be savvy about anybody professing they've got a winning lottery ticket they claim they can't collect on," he said. "The thing that's most important to remember is that if it sounds too good to be true, then it usually is, whether the deal comes from somebody trying to sell a supposed winning ticket on the street or from a company claiming they represent a famous international lottery."

For more information about the Texas Lottery Commission or the Latin *Lotto* Scam, please visit the official Texas Lottery Commission Web site at <http://www.txlottery.org>

"These are phony papers designed to lure people into giving up personal financial information."

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.

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