



Cops warn of Spanish-speaking suspects conning victims out of cash in Canoga Park

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Police are warning people to be aware of a scam involving Spanish-speaking suspects who are luring victims out of large sums of money with the promise of earning a large return for their involvement.

Topanga Area Detectives are asking for the public's help in identifying and locating a group of suspects that are working in pairs to target Spanish speaking individuals, walking alone.

Once the suspects have engaged the victim in a conversation, they are using various scams to enlist the victim's financial help in return for a substantial profit.

One scam includes the claim that the suspects are in possession of a winning lottery ticket, but need the victim's help to cash it. Other ruses include: convincing victim's that they have a sick relative and need money for their care; that they need help in cashing a check they are carrying; or telling the victim that they have gold bars worth thousands of dollars and will provide them to the victim in exchange for cash.

Ultimately the victim is scammed out of, in some cases, their entire life savings.

The group has been working in the Canoga Park area and detectives are warning the public to beware of strangers approaching them and claiming they are in need of large amounts of cash, or claiming to have a winning lottery ticket.

The suspects range in age from mid 20s to mid 50s and are identified only as male Hispanics, and one female Hispanic.

Anyone with information on these suspects, or who believe they may have been a victim of this group, is asked to call Topanga Area Detective Pam Pitcher at (818) 756-4820. During off-hours or on weekends, calls may be directed to a 24-hour, toll-free number at 1-877-LAPD-24-7 (527-3247). Callers may also text "Crimes" with a cell phone or log on to www.lapdonline.org and click on web tips. When using a cell phone, all messages should begin with "LAPD." Tipsters may remain anonymous.