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Tuesday, January 10, 2012

Woman reportedly bilked of almost \$400,000 in Holden

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HOLDEN — Holden police are investigating a scam in which an elderly town resident was bilked of close to \$400,000, they said.

Police said the 80-year-old woman received a letter in the mail claiming she had been awarded a large amount of money, but was required to pay fees and complete paperwork before the money would be released. According to police, the woman, without the knowledge of her children, started sending money. She started receiving notices indicating she would be awarded more money, and the scam went on for about a year. She sent about \$400,000, police said.

Police said groups of criminals sent out these award notices to hundreds, and possibly thousands of people. There are many other known victims, and police and the family of the elderly resident are working together to protect her to make sure she is not victimized further. Federal authorities are assisting police.

Police said residents should be warned that high-pressure tactics are a clue that a call is not legitimate. Other hints that a call might be a scam is winning lotteries you never entered or sending money up-front before winnings are released.

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