

## Be Wary of “El Gordo” Spanish Lottery Scam

Beware of a foreign lottery scam that adopts the name of Spain’s largest lottery prize, “El Gordo,” to con consumers out of substantial sums of money. According to the Spanish government, consumers in the United States may receive phony letters, as well as forged materials purporting to be from Spanish banks, that claim that these consumers have been the “lucky winners” of a large cash prize. To claim the prize, the consumer is told he or she must pay a sum that goes toward the taxes, bank costs, and processing fees necessary to deliver the prize money.

The real drawing for the “El Gordo” prize takes place during the holiday season. The Spanish government indicates that the fraudsters who carry out the phony drawing use the actual addresses of official Spanish organizations to make their scam appear legitimate.

If you receive a letter this holiday season claiming you have won a big prize in a foreign lottery, do not pay any money—it is a scam. It is illegal for U.S. consumers to participate in a foreign lottery. The following are some useful tips to prevent consumers from being duped.

- If you play a foreign lottery—through the mail or over the telephone—you’re violating federal law.
- There are no secret systems for winning foreign lotteries. Your chances of winning more than the cost of your tickets are slim to none.
- If you purchase one foreign lottery ticket, expect many more bogus offers for lottery or investment “opportunities.” Your name will be placed on “sucker lists” that fraudulent telemarketers buy and sell.

- Keep your credit card and bank account numbers to yourself. Scam artists often ask for them during an unsolicited sales pitch.

Consumers are encouraged to give any suspicious “lottery” material from a foreign country to a local postmaster.

For more information, or to file a complaint, contact the Bureau of Consumer Protection at:

**(800) 422-7128**

**FAX: (608) 224-4939**

**TTY: (608) 224-5058**

**E-MAIL:**

**[datcph hotline@datcp.state.wi.us](mailto:datcph hotline@datcp.state.wi.us)**

**WEBSITE:**

**[www.datcp.state.wi.us](http://www.datcp.state.wi.us)**

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