A little skepticism helps guard against con artists

A deal that sounds too good to be true probably is.

11 is most likely a con game or syndie to take your money and give hack little or nothing in return.

While people over age 65 make up only 12 percent of the population, they constitute about 30 percent of spam victims. Often the victims of such ploys are older women, but con artists will try their tactics on any-dise.

dritist will try their sected of and the dree of the tricked into paying out our hard-carned money for "phony deals," but don artists are experts in psychology and human behavior. Their smooth talk and self-assured manner can win your confidence and, before you know it, your money, too.

To protect yourself from swindles,



you should be on the lookout for common consumer frauds and read the papers to find out about any new

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ploys being used in your area.
One of the many scams to watch
out for is the Home Repair/Inspec-

tion Fraud. In this scheme, an individual offers to do a repair or inspection on-the-spot because the control of the property of the property

their opinion.

Check to see if there is a charge

for estimates. Ask friends for recommendations and check with past customers or the Better Business Bureau before signing a contract. Be supicious of high-pressure sales tactics and one-time-only deals.
Arrange to make installment payments: one-third at the beginning of the job, one-third when the job is near completion, and the balance when the work is done. Pay by check, not cash, and make sure you get a written guarantee.

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Legitimate companies are injured, too, when con artists imitate their sales methods. Learn to sort the bad apple from the good to protect yourself from scams.

self from scams.

If it happens to you, don't be too embarrassed to make a police report, or think that the police can't do anything to help. Your police report can help to prevent others from being victimized, and, maybe, put

the con artist in Jail. Other things you can do include:

• Inform your Neighborhood Watch or subdivision association of any known or suspected con games

any known or suspected con games in the area.

• Call your consumer protection ageory and the local newspapers iff, you think you're a victim of fraud. Work with the police and other agencies by providing any information you have about what occurred, the person(s) involved, etc.

• Contact the Better Business Boreau to help you resolve the compilant.

reau to help you resolve the com-plaint.

• Contact your local postmaster if you think you're a victim of mail:

be alert.
Kim Kemske is a crime prevention technician with the Farmington Hills Police Department.

police/fire calls

Listed below are some of the armington-area police incients, fire calls and court cases reported during the past week:

LARCENY ATTEMPTS

Two Farmington restaurants and altivonia butcher shop were visited by a man Aug. 13 who police believe was attempting to fraudulently obtain refunds.

According to a Farmington Department of Public Safety report,

the man visited the A & W restaurant, 22004 Farmington Road, and the Kowaksi store at 22030 Farmington Road in the mid-alternoon hours. At the A & W, he told employees he had become ill from eating food and demanded a refund. At the Kowalksi store, he asked for a refund on 5 pounds of dip, saying it had a hair in it. In neither case did he physically return the product.

As he visited the Kowalski store, an employee of the Butcher Block

store on Farmington Road just south of Eight Mile called to warn employers there the same man had just attempted the same thing at their Livonia store.

According to police, a Kowalski employee receiled the man coming in and obtaining a 11s refund in July after complaining of an alleged problem.

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Police are seeking warrants charging a 30-year-old Westland man.

• TRESPASSERS STOPPED

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Three youths were stopped and
ticketed early the morning of Aug.
Is, after they were seen on the roof
of Flanders Elementary School,
2600 Flanders, Farmington Department of Public Safety report,
the three were on the roof for about
5-10 minutes. There was no damage.
They were stopped leaving the scene
and ticketed for trespassing. Two
were 16-year-olds and the other a 17-

year-old. All were from the Farm-ington area.

• THEFTS REPORTED

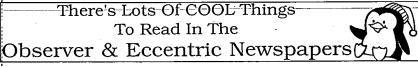
THEFTS REPORTED
 Some \$250 in rolled coins was stolen August 14 from Kitts Tools, 27600 Eight Mile, Farmington Hills, Aug. 14. Two prior break-ins were reported with similar methods of operation, police said.

A thief took off with nearly \$15,000 worth of property following

a break-in at a Halsted residence in the Hills Aug. 14. Among the items stolen were \$2,200 cash, a crystal ashtray and lighter, gold chains and a VCR.

A Greenhill Street resident reported 4785 in property stolen from his1988 Ford T-Bird Aug. 15. Hills police observed three subjects cruising
apartments and condo complexes on
Nine Mile Road, looking into vehicles with small flashlights.

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