

In the Community



Power Credit Union participated in the 2008 Credit Union Coat Drive.

Your generous donations made a big difference in someone's life. Thank you to everyone!



Holiday Closures

January 1st

New Year's Day

January 19th

Martin Luther King Day

February 16th

President's Day



Now That's **POWER**



We Do Business in Accordance With the Federal Fair Housing Law and the Equal Credit Opportunity Act



Fall Issue

4th Qtr. 2008

Little Known Gift Card Scams That Actually Pose a Bigger Threat This Holiday Season

<http://www.scambusters.org/giftcard.html>

With gift card sales estimates at \$24.81 billion this holiday season (up from \$18.48 billion last year according to the NRF), it is not surprising that there are bigger gift card scams going on right now even if the one on the news is overstated.

According to experts, there are three MUCH more common types of gift card scams:

1. Used, counterfeit and fraudulent gift cards are being sold on auction web sites.
2. Sellers often overstate the value of real gift cards they are selling on auction web sites, so buyers don't get what they think they are purchasing.
3. Scammers are using stolen credit cards to buy gift cards and then selling these gift cards for cash, either at online auction sites or elsewhere.

In other words, auction gift card scams now pose a much bigger threat than gift cards displayed on public racks in stores.

Here are two other current gift card scams:

- Crooks swap blank gift cards that they stole on previous trips to a store for cards activated by clerks when they purchase them. Since the clerks don't realize that the returned cards are blank rather than the

ones just purchased, the scammers are able to steal fully charged cards

- Thieves also carefully open the packaging of new gift cards and replace them with used, worthless cards. When the card is sold, the gift card the scammer has in his possession gets activated, rather than the worthless used card that the real buyer has. (This will only work on some types of cards.)



8 Tips for Protecting Yourself From Any Gift Card Scam

There are plenty of things that you can do to protect yourself from gift card scams. And the best part is that none of these things will take more than a few minutes. Just follow these eight simple tips to make shopping for gift cards safer:

1. **Don't buy gift cards from online auction sites.** Since this is a large source of gift card fraud, these cheap gift cards may well be worthless to you. Sure, some of these cards are real, but many are stolen, counterfeit or used. It's not worth the risk.
2. **Only buy gift cards directly from the store issuing the gift card or from a secure retailer's web site--** no matter how much cheaper they may be somewhere else.



Pueblo West Office

120 S. Crescent Drive
719.647.2898

Hours:

Monday - Friday

Lobby: 8:30a.m. - 7:00p.m.

Drive-up: 7:00a.m. - 7:00p.m.

Saturday Lobby & Drive-up: 8:00a.m. - Noon

Our Privacy Policy: Security - Integrity - Confidentiality

The following privacy principles were established to maintain the security, integrity and confidentiality of your personal financial information.

The type of information we collect

We routinely collect and retain the information we obtain from your account applications, transaction history (for deposits, loans, credit cards, etc.) and from consumer reports. This information helps us:

- **To establish and administer your accounts** - Example: We ask for personally identifying information to protect your accounts from fraud.
- **To satisfy certain regulatory requirements** - Example: When you open an account that pays interest, we are required by the Internal Revenue Service to obtain your social security number.
- **To better understand you so that we may provide additional or improved products or services** - Example: we require information

concerning your credit history and your assets to determine if you qualify for a loan approval. We do not share the non-public personal information of our current or previous members and nonmember customers with affiliates as permitted or required by law.

How is that information protected?

Access to your personally identifiable financial information is limited to employees with a specific business reason for utilizing this data. Our employees are educated about the importance of maintaining confidentiality and member privacy. If necessary, we take appropriate disciplinary steps to enforce our employees' responsibility to protect your very personal information. In order to prevent unauthorized access to your information, we maintain security standards and procedures that conform with industry practices. These security standards and procedures are routinely tested to verify the integrity of our systems.

If you do buy a gift card online, make sure you buy it from the place that you plan to use it.

3. Don't buy gift cards off of a publicly displayed racks in retail stores.

In addition, don't assume that because gift cards are inaccessible to the public, they are safe. After all, store employees can participate in gift card scam too.

4. Always carefully examine both the front and back of a gift card before you buy it.

If you can see a PIN number, put the card back and get a different one. If a gift card looks like it could have been tampered with, don't buy that gift card.

5. Always ask the store cashier to scan the gift card in front of you.

This will guarantee that your card is valid when you buy it and that it reflects the balance you just charged it with. This will also protect you from crooks who exchange worthless cards for the cards you think you are buying.

6. Always keep your receipt as a proof of purchase as long as there is money stored

on the gift card. Since many retailers can track where the gift card was purchased, activated and used, if the card is stolen, some retailers will replace the card for you if you have your receipt.

7. If possible, register your gift card at the store's web site.

Although not all stores offer this option, you can uncover any misuse of your gift card sooner and report it more quickly.

8. Finally, never, ever give your Social Security number, date of birth or any other unneeded private information when you purchase a gift card.

No reputable company will ask for this info.

And that's it.

Gift cards are convenient and make great gifts. Following these easy tips will help you ensure the person you buy the gift card for is the one who benefits from it!

For more information on scammers, visit www.scambusters.org

Looking for that perfect last minute gift?



A Power Credit Union VISA Gift Card is the perfect gift every time
Stop in today!



Welcome, Welcome, Welcome

Jeannine Algien- PSR II Pueblo West Office

PCU Promotions

Taunya McDowell- Office Manager Cañon City



Brian Sult- Assistant Office Manager Cañon City

Lorraine Rodriguez- Card Service Specialist Main Office

Matt Padilla- PSR II Main Office



Welcome Back

Lisa Moody- Teller 1 Cañon City Office

Sherri Holmes- PSR 1- Mesa Office

Congratulations!