

Job Scams

The job reads like a dream: it's in your area of expertise, it pays a salary more than the current rate, and you can work from home.

For every real job posted online, there are dozens that are fake, meant to entice you to hand over your hard-earned cash. Jennifer Parris, in her article *10 Signs a Job is a Scam*, offers the below tips on how to read between the lines and discover if the job you're about to apply for is real ... or not.

- There's no experience necessary
- The salary is too high
- You need to wire money
- You're offered the job on the spot
- You're receiving email from a non-business address
- You're asked to do an IM interview
- You're asked for personal information
- The ad is written poorly
- They contact you at odd hours
- You have to pay for the job

The Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre categorizes a Job Scam as any fraudulent offering of employment where advance fees are requested to secure a job - or any job offer involving money transfer or the wiring of funds. When you're job hunting, be extremely cautious because it can be easy to fall prey to a job scam.

Go online and check out the many good websites that give detailed information to help you avoid becoming a victim. Here are a few: *anti-fraudcentre.ca*, *competitionbureau.gc.ca*, *sse.gov.on.ca*, and *mashable.com*.

Buying a Car Privately? Beware of Curbers

Unlicensed vehicle dealers - also known as *Curbers or Curbsiders* - are individuals who don't have a motor dealer's license but are buying and selling multiple vehicles for the primary purpose of making a profit. These are often unscrupulous individuals who deliberately misrepresent themselves and the vehicles they are attempting to sell privately, and they may use a number of shady (and illegal) tactics such as using false identification, false vehicle information and false circumstances.

The Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan (FCAA) says that buying a vehicle from a curber is risky. Practices like odometer tampering, selling flood damaged or stolen vehicles, and covering up safety issues are common. Additionally, resolving conflicts between buyers and unlicensed dealers can be costly and frustrating and selling without a license violates *The Motor Dealers Act*. There's often nothing to fall back on if something goes wrong with the vehicle. Dealerships have to take out a bond with the provincial government, which can be drawn from if a car buyer gets stiffed in the sale - something curbers don't have.

FCAA says when buying a vehicle through a classified ad, a buyer should always check the Vehicle Identification Number

(VIN) with SGI to see the vehicle's claims history and if it was previously licensed in Saskatchewan. Also the best way to ensure you're buying from a licensed dealer is to ask to see their license - something all licensed motor dealers must have on their premises.

If you buy from a curber, you could be buying a vehicle that has been involved in an accident, has a lien against it, or has been stolen or damaged - and you have nowhere to turn if things go wrong.

Don't take any risks. Insist that the private seller provide you with an official *Used Vehicle Information Package* or a *Vehicle History Report* which tells you the history of the car's ownership. Don't sign the deal without it. If the seller refuses to provide it, walk away from the deal.

(*carproof.com; carfax.com; ucd.ca; omvic.on.ca; fcaa.gov.sk.ca*)



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SaskWatch is available online
www.consumersask.ca

From the Office ...

CASK's Annual General Meeting was held on May 25th and included guest speakers, financial and committee reports, and election of the Board of Directors for 2014/2015. (see box at left).

Pat Heffernan, CEO of the Better Business Bureau of Saskatchewan, gave the keynote address. He made a presentation on *Consumer Rights in the Age of Online Shopping*, provided tips on how to reduce your risk when shopping online, and talked about the history of the Better Business Bureau (BBB). He said the BBB offers consumer services online and in person and through their efforts help millions of people each year (more info pg 6).

CASK is in the process of writing a document based upon Pat's presentation that will explore issues consumers should be aware of when purchasing products on the Internet.

Crystal Klassen, from Consumer Protection Division of Fi-

nancial and Consumer Affairs Authority (FCAA), spoke about unlicensed motor dealers in Saskatchewan; cautioned consumers to be aware of Curbers (see front page); and gave updates on the Consumer Protection and Business Practices Act. She provided insight into how FCAA operates in Saskatchewan as they continue to educate consumers about their rights, responsibilities and industry standards and provide guidance with regard to filing and resolving complaints. You can find detailed information at: fcaa.gov.sk.ca.

The office is now focusing on preparations for Spotlight on Senior's which will take place September 30 in Saskatoon.

Please don't hesitate to get in touch with us if you experience problems in the marketplace, if you want to check into a product prior to purchasing, or if you need information on your rights and responsibilities.

Have a consumer-smart summer.

Saskatchewan Trivia

- The Saskatchewan Credit Union introduced the first ATM machine in Canada at Regina's Sherwood Credit Union in 1976.
- John Diefenbaker was elected to Parliament 13 times between 1940 and 1979. He died in office in 1979, only a few months after his 13th parliamentary win.
- Tommy Douglas, premier from 1944 to 1961, was the longest-serving premier of Saskatchewan.
- The Yorkton Short Film & Video Festival was established in 1947, making it the longest running festival of its kind in Canada.
- The oldest fossils in the province date back 1,700,000,000 years. Known as stromatolites, they are microscopic cells of blue-green algae found in the extensive seas that once covered the province. The Royal Saskatchewan Museum in Regina has a large specimen of these fossilized algae colonies which were found near Uranium City.
- The highest point of land in Saskatchewan is in the Cypress Hills and is 1,392 metres (4,567 feet) above sea level. The highest parts of the Cypress Hills, along with parts of Wood Mountain Hills, were the only parts of Saskatchewan not covered by glaciers during the last Ice Age.

Saskatchewan Traffic Laws Have Changed



SGI would like to remind residents that the traffic safety laws have changed as of June 27th. The laws around impaired driving are a lot tougher. Instead of the current 30-day license suspension, new drivers caught driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol will face a 60-day license suspension and will have their vehicle seized for three days. And that's just for a first offence – penalties increase based on the number of offences. Experienced drivers will also face longer license suspensions and vehicle seizures.

Those are some of the changes resulting from recommendations made by the Special Committee on Traffic Safety formed last year to address the high rate of injuries and fatalities on Saskatchewan roads.

Other new traffic laws include:

- Convicted impaired drivers will face mandatory user-pay installation of an ignition interlock device on their vehicle, for a minimum nine months on a first offence and up to five years for subsequent offences.
- Drug-impaired drivers will face the same consequences as drinking drivers.
- Drivers caught using their cellphone while driving for the second time within one year will have their vehicle seized for up to seven days.
- Drivers will face harsher penalties when they're travelling at 35 km/h or more over the speed limit (compared to the current 50 km/h).
- Booster seats will be mandatory for children under seven years of age, less than 145 cm (4'9") in height and under 36 kg (80 lbs) in weight.

"Harsher penalties are aimed at deterring the unsafe choices some Saskatchewan drivers are making," said Donna Harpauer, Minister Responsible for SGI. *"We want drivers to think twice before making a bad decision like getting behind the wheel after drinking or texting while driving."*

For more information about the new traffic laws, visit SGI's website at: www.sgi.sk.ca.

Cash For Your Gift Cards

Do you have a gift card (or two or three) that you keep meaning to redeem, but never seem to get around to it. Well ... you're not alone. According to the Consumers Association of Canada, an estimated \$6 billion dollars a year is spent by Canadians on gift cards - but a whopping **40 per cent of them go unredeemed!**

People stuck with unwanted cards can go to: cardswap.ca, giftah.ca, or giftcardrecycle.ca. These Canadian-run websites allow you to turn your unused, or partially used, gift cards into cash or trade your current card for another merchant's card. The amount of the offer depends on the popu-



larity of the merchant, as well as supply, demand and seasonality, but generally range from 65 to 90 per cent of the value of the card. It's not the whole amount, but it sure beats having the cards sitting in your sock drawer gathering dust.

Other sites you can check out include: giftcardswild.com, giftcardgranny.ca, cardpool.com.

When choosing a site, be sure to do your research. Verify the amount of the gift card with the company and research their security measures in case of fraud. For example, CardSwap gives users three weeks to report a problem with their purchases before passing along the purchase money to the seller. You should also investigate their privacy policies to determine who will have access to your address, and make sure that you are comfortable with the options.

(info: globeandmail.com; thestar.com)

How to Store Mushrooms.

Place whole, unwashed mushrooms in a brown paper bag, close up the top, then put it in your fridge. The bag absorbs excess moisture from the mushrooms so they don't get soggy or moldy. Don't store them in your crisper, though - it's too moist. And avoid placing mushrooms near foods with strong odours or flavours because they'll absorb them like a sponge. If you need to store mushrooms for more than a week, consider freezing or drying them.

Be Temperature Wise.

When cooking hamburgers, go by temperature, not by colour as colour doesn't always tell you if hamburgers are safe to eat. Cook ground beef until thickest part is 71°C (160°F). (*Canada.ca/health*)

Water Those Wasps.

If you have uninvited wasps in your house, quickly spray them several times with a water mister. The water on their wings weighs them down, keeps them from flying, and makes them easier to catch.

Mosquito Bites.

'Tis the season for annoying bug bites, but a surprisingly simple remedy exists that can eliminate the itch within minutes. Heat a metal spoon with hot tap water then press it tightly against the bite for a couple of minutes. When you take it off, the itch should be gone. When mosquitoes bite, they inject proteins under your skin to keep your blood from clotting. It's this protein that causes you to itch, but it can't survive at the moderately high temperatures a hot spoon can create. The bump might linger for a few days, but the uncomfortable itching should be gone for good. *Suggestion from a reader:* Last year I got absolutely wrecked with mosquito bites on my legs. Someone told me to hit it with a hair dryer as much as I could physically stand. 3 or 4 minutes of working around my legs and I was completely fine. ANY heat is the key. (*from lifehacker.com*)

Friday the 13th.

June's full moon fell on Friday the 13th. This is a very rare event, because the next time a full moon falls on Friday the 13th will be in 2049.

Is Your Garden Hose Contaminating Your Food?

Garden hoses are not intended for drinking water, so there are no regulations about what kinds of chemicals can be in them. The Ecology Center tested 21 different garden hoses and found one-third of them contained high levels of chemicals, including phthalates, BPA, flame retardants and heavy metals. When water from a hose left out in the sun was tested, it contained BPA levels up to nine times higher, and phthalate levels two times higher, than federal drinking water standards. Dr. Mercola recommends you look for garden hoses made from natural rubber or labeled "drinking water safe" or at least "lead free." You can significantly reduce your toxicant exposure by letting the water run until it's cold before using it.

Acute Sensitivity to Sound.

People with *hyperacusis* have difficulty tolerating sounds that don't seem loud to others, such as running water, fans, walking on leaves or even riding in a car. Some people have an extremely difficult time functioning in an every day environment and find many noises unbearable and painfully loud. There are several networks and organizations online that offer support, discuss treatments, review products to help make their environment more noise friendly, and make referrals to physicians who are knowledgeable and compassionate. (*hyperacusis.net; ucsfhealth.org*)

Always Flush With The Lid Down.

"Polluted water vapor erupts out of a flushing toilet bowl and can take several hours for these particles to settle," says Charles Gerba, Professor of Microbiology at the University of Arizona. "If you have your toothbrush too close to the toilet, you're brushing your teeth with what's in your toilet." Natural News says that it's definitely not healthy to leave toothbrushes exposed in the bathroom and recommends that they be covered and says the toilet lid should always be closed before flushing. Since bacteria can accumulate on toothbrushes wherever they are located, they say it's also a good idea to regularly clean them with a UV device made for that purpose and to use a natural antiseptic toothpaste product such as one that contains tea tree oil. (*webmd.com; naturalnews.com*)



PIECES

Bits & Pieces

Saskatchewan Deaf & Hard of Hearing Services (SDHHS)

SDHHS is a bi-lingual, bi-cultural, non-profit organization, with offices in Regina and Saskatoon, providing support services and programs for persons with hearing loss. These services include sign language interpreting, computerized note-taking, vocational counseling, community service assistance, information and accessibility to many technical aids, assistive and signaling devices, and a discount hearing aid battery program. Almost two million Canadians experience hearing loss and it's one of the fastest growing disabilities in North America. SDHHS is committed to providing services and supports to assist people with hearing loss to fully participate in their lives and communities. Requests for services can be booked by calling: 306.665-6575, toll free: 1.800.667-6575 or by email at: saskatoon@sdhhs.com. Website: sdhhs.com.

Dried Out Masking Tape.

Just when you need it the most, you realize your old roll of masking tape has dried out, leaving it unsticky and totally unusable. The fast fix: microwave it for 10 seconds. The heat will slightly melt the adhesive, restoring its tacky texture.

Cauliflower.

Cauliflower, a member of the cancer-fighting cruciferous family of vegetables, is anti-inflammatory and antioxidant-rich, and may boost both your heart and brain health. It contains an impressive array of vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and other phytochemicals and will provide your body with impressive amounts of vitamin C, vitamin K, beta-carotene, and more while supporting healthy digestion and detoxification. It's also extremely versatile. You can eat it raw, add it to salads, or use it in your cooking. Cauliflower can even be seasoned and mashed for a healthier version of "mashed potatoes."

Places Where Adults Admit to Falling Asleep.

22% behind the wheel of a car
12% at work
11% in church
4% on the bus
3% in the bathroom

Multiple Uses for Dishwashers.

Stop germs from thriving by throwing your kitchen sponges and dishcloths in the dishwasher on the hottest setting possible. Broom heads, dust pans, and vacuum attachments all get spotless, just be sure to remove excess dust and hair to prevent a clog, and skip the dry cycle. Plastic toys can be run through a full cycle. To prevent them from flying all over the place, secure them in a mesh laundry bag on the top rack. Baseball caps can be secured to the top rack with rubber bands and run through a cycle with no detergent. This will blast the germs lurking under the brim while preserving the hat's shape. The dishwasher works well on plastic hairbrushes, headbands and combs but don't try this with natural bristles or wooden handles. Canvas sneakers, flip-flops and rubber boots can all benefit. Instead of detergent, add baking soda for extra freshness - and let them air dry. If the idea of washing stinky shoes and silverware in the same place makes you squeamish, run an empty cycle between loads. *(from Today's Parent Magazine)*

... Did You Know ...

- During a power outage, your freezer will keep food frozen for 24 to 36 hours if the door remains closed.
- In Saskatchewan, trees cause approximately 1,000 power outages a year.
- Texting & Driving is a killer combination causing an average of 6,000 fatalities per year.
- To produce 16 ounces of honey it requires 1,152 bees to travel 112,000 miles and visit 4.5 million flowers.
- There are 31,557,600 seconds in a year.
- Sweden has phased out dental mercury. Several other European countries have either significantly reduced its use or have imposed restrictions on it.
- One of the most searched words on the Merriam Webster website is *ubiquitous*.
- If you rub white chalk over grease stains on clothing, it will remove the stain because of its powerful absorbing qualities.
- You can substitute 1 cup of sugar and 1/4 cup of water for one cup of high fructose corn syrup.
 - $111,111,111 \times 111,111,111 = 12,345,678,987,654,321.$

The Better Business Bureau

Pat Heffernan, CEO of the Better Business Bureau of Saskatchewan, was the keynote speaker at CASK's AGM. He said people today are overwhelmed with choices and often unsure about where to find verified, unbiased information. There are more than 30 million businesses in North America alone, and hundreds of thousands of sites around the world, where people shop online, and also thousands of free and subscription websites that offer a range of information, including reviews, reports, directories, listings, and gripe sites. Pat says the Better Business Bureau is the one place you can find it all. They offer consumer services online and in person - and through their efforts, have helped millions of people each year.

For over 100 years, the BBB has been helping people make smarter decisions as they:

- set standards for ethical business behavior and monitor compliance.
- help consumers identify trustworthy businesses (and those that aren't), through more than 4 million BBB Business Reviews.
- set standards for, and evaluate, thousands of advertisements each year to ensure that people can trust what advertisers say.
- set standards for, and evaluate, the practices of thousands of charities so that donors know where their money is going.
- coach businesses on ethical behavior and how to build stronger, more trusting relationships with their customers.

It's a Dangerous World We Shop In

Heffernan says buying and selling via a web browser provides shopping convenience and efficiency for today's consumer, but it also carries risks. He offered some of the most common tips that consumers can use to reduce the level of risk when shopping online.

- Keep your browsers updated
- Install malware protection software
- Buy from reputable online stores and sellers
- Never follow links to retail sites
- Look for the address bar padlock symbol
- Give out as little information as possible
- Never give out your credit card number over email
- Use a credit card with a minimal limit
- Use online payment services such as PayPal
- If using a mobile device, stick to apps you know.

And Lastly ... Use Common Sense

Go to their website: bbb.org for more information.



Google History

When Google was founded in September 1998, it served about ten thousand search queries per day. By the end of 2006, it was processing that same amount in a single second! In September 1999, one year after being launched, Google was answering 3.5 million searches daily. Nine months later, search volume increased fivefold, reaching 18 million on an average day. By April 2004, users around the world were submitting more than 200 million queries to Google every day. Google now processes over 40,000 search queries every second, which translates to over 3.5 billion searches per day and 1.2 trillion searches per year, worldwide.

Curious Google Facts:

- In 1999, it took Google one month to crawl and build an index of about 50 million pages.
- In 2012, the same task was accomplished in less than one minute.
- 16% to 20% of the queries that get asked have never been asked before.
- Every query has to travel on average 1,500 miles to a data center and back to return the answer to the user.
- A single Google query uses 1,000 computers in 0.2 seconds to retrieve an answer.

(internetlivestats.com/google-search-statistics)

Your Key Might Not Be Exclusive To Your Car

Question: “A while back, I thought my car was stolen because it was not where I’d left it. Turns out it was further back in the parking lot. I’d seen another car similar to mine parked in the same lot on occasion. Is it possible for someone else’s keys to have started my car?”

Answer: Because there is a finite number of combinations for the lock cylinder, it is definitely possible another key will open your door, or start your car.”
(from: yahooanswers.com)

CASK President, Audrey Findlay, relays her experience with this issue a few weeks ago. “Last week my daughter forgot her \$100 pair of steel-toed work boots so she

called and asked if I’d mind using the spare key and dropping them off in her car and she’d change into them during her break. She told me where the car was parked, so I went and dropped off the boots (and cleaned off her front seat of empty water bottles like a good mom), locked her car and went off to run my errands. An hour later she called asking where her boots were.

Long story short, I had unlocked someone else’s car, cleaned out their front seat, and left my daughter’s boots in their vehicle. I went by the dealership and they said it is not uncommon - because there are only so many combinations they can use. My daughter was also going to ask me

to leave her wallet tucked safely under her car seat. It’s a good thing she didn’t because loosing the boots was bad enough - but a wallet with all her ID, etc. could have been disastrous.”

It is important to keep in mind that cars keys may not be exclusive to your vehicle. Whether you use standard keys or “fobs” with remote unlock capacity, there is the potential your car can be opened by someone else’s key ... so be aware!



211 Saskatchewan

When looking for help, it’s often difficult to know where to turn. The maze of phone books, help lines, directories and other databases can be overwhelming.

A single search on the Internet - sk.211.ca - can eliminate this confusion.

Sponsored by the United Ways of Regina and Saskatoon, *211 Saskatchewan* offers up-to-date listing of over 5,000 social, community, health and government services.

It connects people to information about: basic human needs (such as housing, food banks, shelter, and clothing depots); services for children, youth and families; physical and mental health services; assistance for people with disabilities, seniors and newcomers to Canada; and employment support.

Sk.211.ca works from your mobile, tablet, or any internet-connected computer. Visit sk.211.ca and connect to all the services you need.

Panic Button For Emergencies

Most cars made since the late 1990s have a key ring that attaches to a remote entry system transmitter used to lock/unlock your car. It also has a red emergency (panic button) alarm that will sound your car’s horn to help you find where you left your car in a parking lot. It can also summon help in an emergency, such as during a heart attack or criminal attack.

If you hear a noise outside your home or think someone’s trying to get into your house, just press the panic button. The alarm will be set off, and the horn will continue to sound until you turn it off or the car battery dies. It’s a security alarm system that you probably already have and requires no

installation. Test it. It will go off from most everywhere in your house and keep honking until your battery runs down or until you reset it with the panic button on the key fob.

If your car alarm goes off when someone is trying to break into your house, odds are the burglar/rapist won’t stick around. After a few seconds, neighbours will be looking out their windows to see who’s out there and it’ll probably drive the criminal away.

Remember to carry your keys while walking to your car in a parking lot, as well.

It can also be used to summon help during an emergency when you can’t reach a phone. So keep your keys beside your bed at night and sleep easier.

Power Outages - Get Prepared



If your power goes out, you'll want to prepare your house for when the power comes back on. Unplug everything you can. Turn off all tools, appliances and electronic equipment, and turn the thermostat down to minimum, to prevent damage by a sudden surge when power is restored. Turn off all lights, except one inside and one outside, so that both you and the hydro crews outside know that power has been restored. Also, power can be restored more easily when there's not a heavy load on the electrical system.

The Government of Canada's

website-getprepared.gc.ca/-says most power outages will be over almost as soon as they begin, but some can last much longer - days or even weeks.

Power outages are often caused by freezing rain, sleet storms and/or high winds which damage power lines and equipment. Heat waves or cold snaps can also overload the electric power system.

During a power outage, you may be left without heating/air conditioning, lighting, hot water, or even running water. If you only have a cordless phone, you'll also be left without phone service. If you don't have a battery-powered or crank radio, you may have no way of monitoring news broadcasts and could be facing major challenges.

The *Get Prepared* website says people should be prepared to cope on their own during a power outage for at least 72 hours and can greatly lessen the impact by taking the time to prepare in advance. They have plenty of information on how to get prepared and provide details on "*What To Do Before, During & After A Power Outage*".

New Words For Merriam Webster

Merriam-Webster has added 150 new words to its collegiate dictionary, ranging from *hashtag* and *catfish* to *dubstep* and *crowdfunding*, many which speak to pop culture, technology and the Internet. *Selfie*, *tweep*, *steampunk*, *freegan*, *turducken*, *baby bump*, *e-waste*, *fracking*, *pho*, *gamification* and *poutine* are a few examples of the new words that have been added. Merriam-Webster's 2014 Collegiate Dictionary is available in print and online at: merriam-webster.com.

Here's a few definitions:

Selfie: an image of oneself taken by oneself using a digital camera especially for posting on social networks.

Catfish: someone who pretends to be someone they're not using Facebook or other social media to create false identities, particularly to pursue deceptive online romances.

Crowdfunding: The practice of soliciting financial contributions from a large number of people especially from the online community.

Turducken: a dish consisting of a deboned chicken stuffed into a deboned duck, which is in turn stuffed into a deboned turkey.

Turkey Duck Chicken

Membership / Subscription

- () I'd like a one-year CASK membership (includes a one-year subscription to *SaskWatch*) \$ 25.00
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