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Reports of mail scam in western New York

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(Photo: Jamie Germano/file photo 2012)

CHEEKTOWAGA - Cheektowaga Police in Erie County are warning the public of a new scam they say is starting to make the rounds around western New York.

The scam involves identity theft and the U.S. Post Office and the department says it has seen three of these types of cases in the past two months.

The identity thief uses the post office to change the mailing address of the victim. At some point, the victim inquires at the Post Office as to why they aren't getting any mail and are told about the change of address filed in their name.

In two of the three cases Cheektowaga Police have seen, the mail was diverted to a Florida address and the third was changed to an address that victim used many years ago. The thief then uses the victim's identity to open credit cards or loans in their name and the bills are sent to the bogus address. By the time a victim learns what's happened, it's months later because they are not getting the bills.

Police are asking the public to be suspicious if they are not getting their mail as they normally would and to immediately place a fraud alert on themselves and contact the major credit reporting bureaus if they believe their identity has been stolen.

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