



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING
PO Box 9020 Olympia, Washington 98507-98507-9020

FRAUD ALERT

CALL BEFORE YOU WIRE FUNDS*

**Real estate buyers and sellers are being targeted for wire fraud.
Many have lost thousands of dollars.**

Don't become a victim!

Take two easy steps to protect yourself

1. Obtain the phone number of your escrow officer or other intended recipient of the wire transfer early in the transaction.
2. **Before** wiring funds, call the known phone number and speak directly to your escrow officer or other known recipient to confirm wire instructions.

Email hackers impersonating brokers or escrow officers will instruct consumers to wire funds to bank accounts controlled by the hackers. They leave messages creating an urgency to wire money, and may claim the broker or escrow officer is unavailable by telephone. When funds are sent to the hacker, the money is usually gone forever.

Never wire funds without first calling the phone number that you know to be a correct number, and until you've actually spoken with the person you know to be the **real** escrow officer or other licensed professional assisting you.

*Wire transfers have become common but they are not for everyone. If you are uncomfortable with transferring funds electronically, there are other ways to fund real estate transactions, but these alternative methods may require up to several weeks lead time. Ask your escrow officer about alternatives early in the transaction so that you have plenty of time to plan ahead.

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