

Beware of Scams When Searching for Rental Housing

When searching for a place to rent, the last thing you want to get caught in is a scam that causes you to lose money on what you thought was an application fee, security deposit, or first month's rent. The following is an example of a scam that has happened numerous times on Craigslist, and some tips to make sure you don't fall for one the next time you search for [rental housing in Minneapolis](#), St. Paul, or throughout Minnesota.

Example of a Real Scam

A scammer takes an actual listing with a real address, photos, and property information. He or she copies everything, but changes the phone number or email address. Instead of calling or emailing the landlord, you end up contacting the scammer.

They tell you that they are out of the state or the country and unable to show you the property in person. However, you are encouraged to drive by to take a look, but you can't go inside (but you can see what the inside looks like from the photos online). If you like it, you are then asked to mail a check or wire money to reserve the rental home. After sending the money, you never hear from the scammer again.

Don't get scammed! Always do the following when searching for a new home:

1. Meet the landlord or property manager in person.
2. Tour both the inside and outside of the home to make sure it is a good fit for you.
3. Review the lease terms before agreeing to rent a place or paying any money.
4. Don't wire or mail money to anyone until you have met the landlord, toured the property inside and out, applied for the apartment, and agreed to lease terms.