

Local Rental Scams on Craigslist Are Becoming More & More Common

Four of my own listings have become the targets of Nigerian scammers attempting to “rent” homes which they do not own — two of them in the last two weeks. Be careful that you, or someone you know, does not fall victim to this increasingly common scam.

The scam has become so common that I have printed up a “NOT FOR RENT” sign rider to put on such listings as soon as I hear they are targeted.

Although my clients are not the victims of this scam, I would hate to have unsuspecting renters wire \$1,000 or more to Nigeria in the belief that they will get the keys by return mail.

What the scammers do is find homes for sale online and then put an ad on Craigslist pretending to be the homeowner, offering it for rent at below-market rents. They get flooded with email responses and

respond to each victim with a story about how they accepted a missionary job in west Africa and have been told by their agent that the

home is unlikely to sell so they’re offering it for rent. All they want is someone who will love the house as they did.

As soon as the ad appears in Craigslist, my phone starts ringing, because people see my sign in the yard. I explain that it’s a scam, ask them to flag the posting on

Craigslist, and I get in my car to take the “NOT FOR RENT” sign over to the house. My sellers start seeing people driving by their house and even peering in their windows until I put up the sign.

The Craigslist postings have an additional danger associated with them, because the scammers ask their victims to fill out a rental application that asks for information

that can be used for identity theft.

I spoke on Monday with Rep, Ed Perlmutter, who is on the House Banking Committee, and after a lengthy discussion about how to induce cooperation from foreign governments in prosecuting scammers, we ended up with the concept of better regulating Western Union and Moneygram, both of which are used to deliver money to scammers. Tell your congressman that you support such legislation.

Community Garage Sale in Golden This Saturday A.M.

My big May 1st garage sale for Mountain Ridge caught the attention of a subdivision across highway 93, and Canyon Point Villas has asked me to sponsor a similar community garage sale for them.

About 15 homes are participating. It starts at 8 a.m. and continues through noon. You can view a map of the participating homes at www.GoldenGarageSale.com.

This Week’s Featured New Listing:

Mountain Ridge Home Is One-of-a-Kind

I love the Village at Mountain Ridge, located just across Hwy 93 from Mitchell Elementary School in Golden. This house is unique — not a single home in this subdivision has the same floor plan. It has a main-floor master suite, plus three bedrooms upstairs, all with walk-in closets. It has all new carpeting and new windows. Its cul-de-sac location on the eastern edge of the subdivision gives it a panoramic view of Golden and the Table Mountains from its deck and upstairs loft and bedroom. The unfinished basement provides plenty of storage, and the large grassy fenced yard is professionally landscaped and a joy to be in! This home is priced at the price per square foot of its comps and should sell quickly at this price. A video tour is in production. Visit the website to see it, or call me.



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