

**WTNS Radio OSU Extension Update for April 24, 2023**  
**Healthy People. Healthy Finances. Healthy Relationships.**

On today's OSU Extension update for Healthy People, Healthy Finances, & Healthy Relationships we'll talk about avoiding scams, and as always look at some upcoming programs from OSU Extension.

This week I talked with a group of seniors at the Coshocton Senior Center about avoiding scams. When I asked how many people had received a phone call or text or letter in the mail they believed to be a potential scam in just the past two days, everyone raised their hand. One person shouted out, "I just got a text 5 minutes ago!"

I am sure we can all relate to this. Federal Trade Commission (FTC) data shows that consumers reported losing nearly \$8.8 billion to fraud in 2022, an increase of more than 30% over the previous year.

The FTC received fraud reports from over 2 million consumers last year. The most common categories in order were imposter scams; online shopping scams; prizes, sweepstakes, and lotteries; investment related reports; and business and job opportunities rounded out the top five fraud categories.

Consumers reported losing more money to investment scams than any other category in 2022. The total of over \$3.8 billion more than doubles the amount reported lost in 2021. Overall, the second highest reported loss amount came from imposter scams, with losses of \$2.6 billion reported.

There is a reason that the FTC is concerned for older adults and wants to get the word out about avoiding and reporting scams. A greater percentage of younger people report fraud than those who are older. Almost half of those under age 19 compared to less than a quarter of those over 80. However, the losses are much higher on average for older adults. According to 2022 data, the average fraud loss was \$1,000 for those age 70-79 and a loss of \$1,674 for those over age 80.

It is interesting to look at the breakdown of scam type for each age group. As you can imagine, for the youngest age groups tech scams don't even show up in the top 10 of scam types. Then beginning at age 40, they creep in at number 7 of the top 10. Then tech scams gradually move up until reaching the top 3 as the most commonly reported type of scam for those over 80.

But young people are getting scammed as well. The amount of money on average is lower. Online shopping scams are more common for younger people to report than other age groups. And negative reviews are a common part of this category. People will lie with false, negative reviews about an online product. This keeps potential consumers from purchasing the product or service. I know that I personally rely on reviews often before making online purchases, so knowing this information makes me question the validity of these reviews at times.

In 2022, the most reported type of scam for almost all ages were imposter scams. For those over 80, government imposter scams were the most common. It is good to keep up the conversations with our parents and grandparents about potential scams. The best scammers truly are masters at deception, but their tactics are pretty simple. They play off our fears and usual predictive behaviors.

I was also happy to have Bob Bigrigg from Park National Bank join me at the Senior Center. Bob shared this about scams, “If it sounds too good to be true, then 99.9% of the time, it is too good to be true.” Bottom line, resist the pressure to act immediately and do not give personal or financial information in response to a request you are not expecting. Stop and talk to someone you trust before you do anything else.

And now let’s look at some upcoming programs from OSU Extension. OSU Extension will also be offering the ServSafe® Manager Food Safety Training course on Thursdays, June 8, 15, and 22 from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., with the proctored exam Thursday, June 29. Look for registration details on our website, [Coshocton.osu.edu](https://coshocton.osu.edu).

In closing, at OSU Extension, we are proud to work for Coshocton County to help educate and improve our families, farms, and businesses. Please feel free to contact OSU Extension for more information at 740-622-2265 or visit our website at [coshocton.osu.edu](https://coshocton.osu.edu). Make it a healthy day!