

Vacant Land Scams

What: Property fraud involving vacant land has increased significantly and is often carried out by sophisticated criminal networks.

How: Fraudsters impersonate legitimate owners using fake identification, forged documents, spoofed email addresses, and fraudulent notary arrangements to sell property they do not own.

Red Flags



- Will only communicate via text or email,
- Price below market value
- Pressure to list quickly
- Detail of property are vague
- Ownership details don't match public records

Verification



- Verify identity (In Person or Live Video)
- Meet at the property
- Review two forms of ID.
- Independently confirm ownership through public records, verify names and mailing addresses
- Validate supporting documentation including property tax statements
- Send registered letter to owner of record with signature required

Suspect Fraud?

- Stop the transaction immediately until concerns are resolved
- Notify your broker
- Report the matter to local or county law enforcement
- Notify the title company, closing attorney, or settlement agent immediately
- Preserve all records
- Report the incident to your organization or association for escalation to appropriate authorities

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