New Scam Claims the FTC Is Awarding Prizes

After a person showed up at FTC headquarters looking for his winnings from a mail scam, the organization is warning consumers not to fall for this scheme.

How does this scam work?
Scammers mailed out letters that said the recipients won $5 million, in this specific case. The letters looked real, with a picture of the FTC building and a copy of the seal.

To claim the "certified" and "verified" prize from the Federal Trade Commission, the winner had to act immediately, or else the winnings would go to someone else. The man who came to ask about this at the FTC had spoken to the scammers, who were posing as FTC officials, and they told him he had to pay $500 in fees to get his prize.

The FTC's message about this is simple — anyone who asks you to pay fees by wiring money or putting money on a gift card, that's a scam.

If you ever get a call, email, letter or other notification that you've won something but you must pay to receive your prize, stop and check it out.

What if I'm a victim?
Always report all scams and fraud to your local law enforcement agency's non-emergency number. If you believe someone is in danger, call 911. Report all scams and financial abuse to the state attorney general, and file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission at ftc.gov/complaint.

How can I protect myself?
The FTC does not give out prizes and does not verify or certify prizes. Anyone who says it does is lying and trying to steal money. The organization also does not call, email or send letters to people asking for money for any reason.

Companies that do give out prizes do not ask winners to give them money before claiming the prizes. If anyone asks for your credit card or bank account information to claim a prize, it's a scam. If