

## **Avoiding Coronavirus Scams and Price Gouging**

Hand sanitizer at \$67 a bottle. Toilet paper at \$15 a roll. Unfortunately, we have seen instances of this in our stores and on the internet. As with any public crisis, when concerns over the coronavirus increase, there will be some people who prey on people's fears for their personal financial advantage. But what can we do about it?

First, if you see someone price gouging, report it. The Colorado Attorney General's Office is collecting information on individuals and stores that are taking advantage of people's fears through overcharging the public for necessary products. You can reach the Attorney General's office by phone at 1-800-222-4444 or go online to report the incident at [stopfraudcolorado.gov](http://stopfraudcolorado.gov). In addition, you can contact the Southern Ute Legal Department at (970) 563-2141 and they can assist you in reaching out to the Attorney General.

The Department of Justice also has a division to investigate Disaster Fraud. You can reach the Disaster Fraud at 1-877-720-5721, or online at [justice.gov](http://justice.gov), or email [disaster@leo.gov](mailto:disaster@leo.gov).

Second, beware of scams. Now that more and more people are confined to their homes, we are seeing an increase in telephone and computer scams. Often these are promising treatments for the coronavirus for a price. Currently there are no medical treatments for the virus and any promised treatments over the phone or internet are fake. Like the incidents of price gouging, if you see or experience this, report it to the Attorney General or the Legal Department.

Finally, be careful with emails that claim to be from the World Health Organization or other group promising a vaccine or test for the virus. Delete it. This is what is called a phishing scam. If you click on the email, the person who sent it will try to gain access to personal information on your computer.

As always, if you have any questions or need any assistance, please contact a member of Tribal Council, the Executive Office, or the Legal Department.