



BC Crime Prevention Association

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Q: I have recently agreed to become a Mystery Shopper by answering an ad in the Abbotsford News paper. I have heard now that there are scams occurring with Mystery Shoppers. I cannot find any report on this company through the BBB and was hoping you could assist me before I got any further into it. The company name is Zenith Consulting.
Thanks for you time.

A: You are wise to do some checking before proceeding further with this Mystery Shopper employment offer. Not all Mystery Shopper opportunities are scams but unfortunately there are some and job seekers need to do their homework before making a decision.

Mystery Shopper scams were referenced in the Better Business Bureau "Top 10 Scams" just released before Christmas - see <http://mbc.bbb.org/WWWRoot/SitePage.aspx?site=164&id=c4c398ad-9e83-4722-be52-dea9cdca5d2f&art=8322> and in particular paragraph 2 of the 8th scam "Bogus Cheques & Overpayment Schemes.

Note that there are many legitimate businesses worldwide that have the name Zenith Consulting but a GOOGLE search shows that last October "Zenith Consulting" was mentioned in a CTV Calgary counterfeit cheques scam investigation that was connected to a Mystery Shopper job offer- see

http://calgary.ctv.ca/servlet/an/local/CTVNews/20081028/CGY_Cheque_Scam_081028/20081028/?hub=CalgaryHome

Here is an interview about the Mystery shopping scam on CTV's Olsen On Your Side:

http://www.ctvbc.ctv.ca/servlet/an/local/CTVNews/20081211/BC_olsen_scam_artists_economics_081211/20081211?hub=BritishColumbiaBin

We recommend that you conduct an internet search for "Mystery Shopper Scam" to get a better understanding of the warning signs indicating a potential scam before you make a decision about the Abbotsford newspaper advertisement.