

CITY OF BALTIMORE

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HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Health Department Warns about STD Hoax

BALTIMORE, MD- (April 16, 2008)- The Baltimore City Health Department is warning city residents to be alert for fake letters that use unauthorized city letterhead and claim to notify the resident about a sexually transmitted disease (STD).

The fake letters tell the recipient that his or her name was provided by a patient with a communicable disease and advise the recipient to call a "Cert. Public Health Agent" named "Mr. H. Lamping" to set up an interview.

The fake letters state that the "Maryland State Department of Health" has been notified. The letters are signed by "Dr. A. Parks, MD, Assistant Director of Health." To date, all fake letters have been sent via the U.S. mail.

These letters are fraudulent. Specifically:

- The Health Department does not have "Cert. Public Health Agents"
- The Health Department does not have "Assistant Directors of Health"
- The Health Department does not employ A. Parks, M.D. or Mr. H. Lamping.
- The state health agency is not called the "Maryland State Department of Health."

The Health Department has reported the hoax to the police department and they are currently conducting an investigation.

City residents who receive letters in the mail about STDs should call 311 and ask for the Health Department's STD program or call the STD program directly at 410-396-4448. The Health Department can confirm the letter is a hoax.

Under certain circumstance, the STD program at the Health Department sends information through the mail to people's homes. If there is any question, please call the STD program at 410-396-4448.

STDs are serious medical conditions that can lead to sterility and other major complications. Any city residents concerned about an STD can receive free care at the Health District Clinic Buildings at 1515 W. North Avenue and 620 N. Caroline Street, Monday through Friday.