

## **SCAM ALERT!!**

Please be aware that there are a number of scams that have been reported regarding repatriation assistance for family members that have passed away abroad. Scam artists have offered funeral homes large sums of money for cooperation in bringing back the remains of their alleged family members from other countries. The targeted funeral homes then wire money to overseas banks and are never reimbursed by the scam artists. They have also been known to use stolen or invalid credit cards where the payment goes through, but since it is illegitimate, a chargeback will eventually be made against the funeral home when the theft is discovered.

Be wary of any inquiry about returning the remains of a loved one from another country or state. These are some of the steps a funeral home can take so not to fall victim to one of these scams.

- Even though it is required when a person dies out of the country for the nearest American consulate or embassy to issue a certificate of death with the casket when it is returned to the United States it is still good practice to personally verify the legitimacy of a death overseas. The funeral home should also verify the intent to repatriate a body by contacting the State Department's Overseas Citizens Services Office at 888-407-4747.
- Never wire money unless the funeral director has verified the identity of the recipient.
- Many scams come from overseas clients so be suspicious of any communication received from an overseas source.
- Be wary of people asking to have you help them transfer large amounts of money into overseas bank accounts or trying to transfer money from an overseas account into one in the United States.
- Do not reply in any manner to someone asking for you to send personal banking information.
- Be certain that everyone in the funeral home, including all staff, is aware of this scam and the ways to protect themselves and the business.