

AutoTrader.com Continues To Raise Consumer Awareness of Online Fraud

Updates Fraud Tips online to include vehicles damaged by hurricanes; adds new hotline and longer customer service hours for consumers

AutoTrader.com, the ultimate automotive marketplace, continues to raise consumer awareness of fraudulent activity on the Internet. The company has updated the fraud tips highlighted on its homepage to include information on the suspected influx of flood damaged vehicles into the used car market. Consumer awareness about the potential dangers associated with these vehicles and how to spot them is the key to keeping them from being purchased unknowingly.

(Logo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20031021/AUTOLOGO>)

It's estimated that over half a million cars were flooded and damaged as a result of the hurricanes in fall of 2005 and many may be making their way into the used car market all over the U.S. and sold without being titled properly. Impacted vehicles may have been submerged in salt water, covered in mud, and contaminated with toxic chemicals. Consumers can take simple steps when buying used cars: schedule an inspection with a certified mechanic, obtain a vehicle history report from a nationally recognized provider such as CARFAX, verify the title with your state's Department of Motor Vehicles, and check the VIN in the National Insurance Crime Bureau's database.

"We're advising consumers to use the same due diligence they normally would when purchasing a used vehicle and working to arm them with additional, current information when we become aware of it," said Alan Smith, vice president of customer service. "The addition of Flood Damaged Vehicles Tips highlights this potential scam for everyone who visits our site."

In addition to the beefed up online tips, AutoTrader.com has created a toll-free fraud hotline - 877-742-8040 - for consumers to call and report suspicious activity as well as extended Customer Support hours for even better service. Consumers can continue to send e-mails to fraudwatch@autotrader.com or call the hotline. The fraud hotline is open 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. ET, Monday through Saturday.

As a result of all its efforts, including an internal Fraud Deterrence Team and improved filters, AutoTrader.com has dramatically increased the number of fraudulent listings caught and removed from the site. One consumer wrote in and said the fraud warning tips online "helped [them] to escape from becoming a victim of auto escrow fraud."

About AutoTrader.com

AutoTrader.com, created in 1997 and headquartered in Atlanta, Ga., is the Internet's leading auto classifieds marketplace and consumer information website.

AutoTrader.com aggregates in a single location more than 2.8 million vehicle listings from 40,000 dealers and 250,000 private owners, which provide the largest selection of vehicles attracting more than 11 million qualified buyers each month. Through innovative merchandising products such as multiple photos and comprehensive search functionality, AutoTrader.com unites buyer and seller online - dramatically improving the way people research, locate and advertise vehicles.

AutoTrader.com is a majority-owned subsidiary of Cox Enterprises. Other investors include Landmark Communications, ADP, Inc., and the venture capital firm Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers.

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SOURCE: AutoTrader.com

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