Insurance tips for seniors

**Life insurance**
- You need less as you age.
- Burial policies might be suitable for seniors.

**Annuities**
- Investment product, sold by insurance companies.
- Growth is tax-deferred.
- You have less control of your money.
- Be suspicious of pressure to move from one annuity to another.
- Variable annuities take on more market risk – not for conservative investors.
- Talk to your financial adviser.

**Long-term care insurance**
- Buy younger if possible – your rates will be grandfathered.
- Medicare doesn’t pay, Medicaid does.
- Buying a “partnership policy” helps you qualify for Medicaid without spending down assets (contact Department of Insurance to make sure you’re buying a partnership policy).

**Car “extended warranty’ offer postcards**
- These are not from your car manufacturer.
- They don’t know when your factory warranty expires.
- Don’t pay until you’ve seen and signed a contract.

**Free lunch seminars**
- Enjoy, but watch for high-pressure sales pitches.
- Usually selling annuities and long-term care insurance.

**Reverse mortgages**
- You borrow cash against the equity in your home – repaid upon death or sale of your home.
- Depletes your equity.
- High upfront fees.
- Watch for cross-selling – “Buy a reverse mortgage and spend the cash on an annuity.”
- Consult with a trusted financial adviser.

**Insurance scams**
- Write your check to the insurance company, not the agent.
- Contact the Department of Insurance if you don’t get a policy in the mail shortly after paying.
- Don’t give personal info (credit card, debit card or bank account number) to any supposed insurance salesman who contacts you by phone or email.

**Payday loans**
- You can borrow up to $500.
- Loan must be paid back in 14 to 31 days.
- You can renew up to six times.
- 2.8 million loans are made yearly in Missouri.
- Average loan in Missouri: $290.
- Average number of renewals: 1.7.
- Average annual percentage rate (APR): 430%.