

**For Immediate Release
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Canadian securities regulators announce launch of online investment fraud awareness campaign

Calgary – To cap off Investor Education Month, Canadian securities regulators announced today the launch of a new online fraud awareness campaign to start in November. The online campaign is designed to target those Canadians who are enticed by slick online fraudulent investment opportunities.

“Our enforcement teams across the country have firsthand knowledge of how unscrupulous promoters are turning to the internet to market their fraudulent investment opportunities and the threat these online investment scams pose to Canadian investors,” said Bill Rice, Chair of the Canadian Securities Administrators (CSA) and Chair and CEO of the Alberta Securities Commission. “Canadian securities regulators felt it was important to tackle these tactics head on and educate potential investors in the same spaces where fraudsters solicit their victims.”

The online public education initiative will include online advertisements and social media promotions that point to a video and website of a fictitious company, BlueHedge Investments, to illustrate how scam artists use these tools to lure unsuspecting investors in cyberspace. Soon after people land on the fictitious company’s website, they are redirected to an educational website to help them recognize, avoid and report investment scams they might find online or via social media.

“The red flags we highlight in the campaign are based on techniques that we have observed tech-savvy fraudsters commonly use when soliciting victims online,” said Rice. “Our objective is to reach these potential investors and arm them with information to avoid investment fraud so they don’t become a victim of these cyber scams.”

CSA members involved in the initiative include the Alberta Securities Commission, the Autorité des marchés financiers of Québec, the British Columbia Securities Commission, the Financial Services Regulation Division of Newfoundland and Labrador, the New Brunswick Securities Commission, the Northwest Territories Securities Office, the Nova Scotia Securities Commission, the Nunavut Securities Office, the Prince Edward Island Securities Office, the Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission, and the Yukon Securities Registry. The campaign will run mid-November 2011 to mid-February 2012.

The CSA, the council of securities regulators of Canada’s provinces and territories, coordinates and harmonizes regulation for the Canadian capital markets.

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