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Securities Commission

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Commission Issues Temporary Cease Trade Order to stop potential boiler room scam

Halifax - The Nova Scotia Securities Commission has issued a temporary cease trade order against Stratus Financial Group International (Stratus), Stratus Offshore, Magnus Torgenson and John Westbrook.

The Commission received three complaints from Nova Scotia residents saying they were cold called by the company's representatives pressuring them to invest in natural gas futures and forex options. They are not registered to sell securities in this province and the Commission has ordered Stratus, Magnus Torgenson and Westbrook to cease trading in Nova Scotia immediately.

"Investors who fall prey to the high-pressure, now-or-never script used by boiler room representatives are at significant risk of losing a lot of money." said Heidi Schedler, enforcement counsel for the Commission. "We're concerned for the financial safety of Nova Scotians and want the public to know that they can always hang up the phone and take the time to make sure that whoever is contacting them is registered with a Securities Commission."

A boiler room is when people use a high pressure approach by calling lists of people, known as "sucker lists", and pressure them into buying highly speculative and sometimes fraudulent investments. Victims are often discouraged from doing any of their own research and are often told things like "it's a sure thing" and "once in a lifetime opportunity." The callers are extremely persistent, use high pressure sales tactics and can be very convincing.

Stratus is also the subject of a [Permanent Cease Trade order in New Brunswick](#)

The Commission urges Nova Scotians to exercise extreme caution when dealing with firms that are not registered in Nova Scotia. It is illegal to solicit investments in the province without registering with the Commission and complying with Nova Scotia securities laws. To see if a company or person is registered, you can check the [Canadian Securities Administrators'](#) National Registration Search.

Please [contact us](#) to report a scam or file complaint. [View Order](#)

The Nova Scotia Securities Commission is the provincial government agency responsible for regulating the investment industry in the province.

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