

Warning: Scammers Claiming to be IRS on the Rise!

Beware of sophisticated phone scams that try to separate you from your hard earned money.

Victims of these increasingly bold scams are contacted by phone and told that they owe the IRS money immediately. If the victims seem reluctant, the scammers threaten the taxpayers with arrest, suspension of drivers or business license or even deportation. The caller becomes increasingly aggressive, even hostile and insulting.

Sometimes these callers will say that you have a refund due in order to trick you into revealing your private information. They can even alter the caller ID to make it appear as though the IRS is actually calling.

If you are called by someone on the phone claiming to be from the IRS, tell them that you are represented by an enrolled agent. Give them the name and contact information of your enrolled agent and nothing more.

The reason these scams continue is because they are successful. The reason that they are so successful is that the scammer is very convincing. The IRS will never ask for a wire transfer or credit card numbers over the phone. As a matter of fact, your first contact with the IRS will almost never be by the phone or email. You will usually receive numerous correspondences through the US postal service before the IRS uses alternative means to contact you.

In truth, the IRS never initiates contact with taxpayers by email, text, Facebook, or any kind of electronic means to request personal or financial information. And if the caller is asking for information on your bank or credit card accounts, or for PINs or passwords, you can bet he or she is NOT calling from the IRS!

The IRS has developed a list of common characteristics of these scams. They are as follows:

1. Scammers use fake names and IRS badge numbers. They generally use common names and surnames to identify themselves.
2. Scammers may be able to recite the last four digits of a victim's Social Security number.
3. Scammers will spoof the IRS toll-free number on the caller ID to make it appear it's the IRS calling.
4. Scammers sometimes send bogus IRS emails to some victims to support their bogus calls.
5. Victims hear background noise of other calls being conducted to mimic a call center.
6. After threatening victims with jail time or drivers license revocation, scammers hang up and others soon call back pretending to be from the local police or DMV, and the caller ID supports their claim.

If you receive a call from one of these phony IRS scammers, remember, tell the caller that you are represented by an enrolled agent and give them my name and contact information. You should then get off the phone and let me know about the situation as soon as possible.

Thanks,

Stuart R Paul, EA