

We have been getting questions about scams over the internet, through the mail as well as by telephone.

Remember that vendors often sell your e-mail information when you enter contests and sign up for e-mail notification for sales from their stores and associates. This information is often sold to other businesses which is typically for legitimate purposes but is available. I recommend that you set up a separate free e-mail account to use for contests and retailer coupons rather than use your primary e-mail account. This will reduce the amount of junk e-mail you get as well as protect your contacts from emails that auto search for your contact list.

Here is some info from the Utah Department of Consumer Protection:

You can reduce junk calls and junk mail.

To reduce unwanted phone calls, register your telephone number with the National Do-Not-Call Registry:

WWW.DONOTCALL.GOV

1-888-382-1222 (TTY 1-866-290-4236)

The Direct Marketing Association provides a mail preference services. To reduce unwanted junk mail, send your name, address and telephone number, including area code to:

MAIL PREFERENCE SERVICE

PO BOX 643

CARMEL NY 10512

For more information, visit

WWW.DMACONSUMERS.ORG

WWW.JUNKBUSTERS.COM

You can also call the Utah Division of Consumer Protection
phone: (801) 530-6601

toll free: (800) 721-SAFE

fax: (801) 530-6001

www.dcp.utah.gov

Tip-Offs to a Rip-Off

1. "You've been specially selected to hear this offer."
2. "You'll get a wonderful free bonus if you buy our product."
3. "You've won a valuable prize" or "You've won money in a foreign lottery" – especially if you must pay a fee or tax, or buy a product, before getting your prize.
4. "You must send money right away" – especially if you are asked to use a wire service or courier.
5. "This investment is low risk and provides a higher return than you can get anywhere else."
6. "You have to make up your mind right away."
7. "You don't need to check our company with anyone."
8. "We'll just put the shipping and handling charges on your credit card."
9. "You don't need any written information or references."

**REMEMBER! IF IT SOUNDS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE,
IT PROBABLY IS!**

A message from U.S. Treasury Inspector General J. Russell George about IRS tax scams.

“The number of people receiving these unsolicited calls from individuals who fraudulently claim to represent the IRS is growing at an alarming rate,” George said. “At all times, especially around the time of the tax filing season, we want to make sure that taxpayers are alerted to this scam so they are not harmed by these criminals,” he said, adding, “Do not become a victim.” Inspector General George noted that the scam has hit taxpayers in every State in the country. Callers claiming to be from the IRS tell intended victims they owe taxes and must pay using a pre-paid debit card, money order or a wire transfer. The scammers threaten those who refuse to pay with being charged for a criminal violation, a grand jury indictment, immediate arrest, deportation or loss of a business or driver’s license.

Here is what you need to know. The IRS generally first contacts people by mail – not by phone – about unpaid taxes and the IRS will not ask for payment using a prepaid debit card, a money order or wire a transfer. The IRS also will not ask for a credit card number over the phone. The callers who commit this fraud often:

- Utilize an automated robocall machine.
- Use common names and fake IRS badge numbers.
- May know the last four digits of the victim’s Social Security Number.
- Make caller ID information appear as if the IRS is calling.
- Aggressively demand immediate payment to avoid being criminally charged or arrested.
- Claim that hanging up the telephone will cause the immediate issuance of an arrest warrant for unpaid taxes.
- Send bogus IRS e-mails to support their scam.
- Call a second or third time claiming to be the police or department of motor vehicles, and the caller ID again supports their claim.

If you get a call from someone claiming to be with the IRS asking for a payment, here’s what to do:

If you owe Federal taxes, or think you might owe taxes, hang up and call the IRS at 800-829-1040. IRS workers can help you with your payment questions.

- If you do not owe taxes, fill out the “IRS Impersonation scam” form on TIGTA’s website, www.tigta.gov, or call TIGTA at 800-366-4484.
- You can also file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission at www.FTC.gov. Add “IRS Telephone Scam” to the comments in your complaint.

TIGTA encourages taxpayers to be alert to phone and e-mail scams that use the IRS name. The IRS will never request personal or financial information by e-mail, text, or any social media. You should forward scam e-mails to phishing@irs.gov. Do not open any attachments or click on any links in those e-mails.

If you’re still not sure that you may be involved in some type of mail fraud or telephone scam, you can always give us a call, we’ll be glad to help. (Weber Consolidated Dispatch 801-395-8221)

Det. D. Moore