July 2015 E-Newsletter

Beware of Scams

By Gwinnett County Police Officer Shane Kelly

In recent months some of you may have heard in the news, seen online or had one of these happen to you. There have been several scams that usually come about when tax season kicks off and a little while after. I have listed a few below that explains a few of them and a few tips on how to protect yourself from becoming a victim.

Phone Scams: Aggressive and threatening phone calls by criminals impersonating IRS agents remains an ongoing threat to taxpayers. The IRS has seen a surge of these phone scams in recent months as scam artists threaten police arrest, deportation, license revocation and other things. The IRS reminds taxpayers to guard against all sorts of con games that arise during any filing season.

Phishing: Taxpayers need to be on guard against fake emails or websites looking to steal personal information. The IRS will not send you an email about a bill or refund out of the blue. Don't click on one claiming to be from the IRS that takes you by surprise. Taxpayers should be wary of clicking on strange emails and websites. They may be scams to steal your personal information.

Identity Theft: Taxpayers need to watch out for identity theft especially around tax time. The IRS continues to aggressively pursue the criminals that file fraudulent returns using someone else's Social Security number. The IRS is making progress on this front but taxpayers still need to be extremely careful and do everything they can to avoid becoming a victim.

These are just a few that are more prevalent and are the easiest to perpetrate. You can guard yourself from these scams by doing a few, very easy things.

Always shred any document with personal information. The IRS is not going to call you for the above list reasons and if you do receive a call take note of the area code it is calling from which is probably from 202 which is actually a Washington DC code but is actually coming from overseas.

If you receive emails claiming to be from your bank, don't click on the link until you contact your local branch to see if they needed to actually speak with you. Once you click the link and it is Malware, your computer will be open to all sorts of cyberattacks.

And last but not least, always check your credit bureau and see if there has been any activity on your report that you are unaware of.

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