

AVOIDING COMMON TAX SCAMS



The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) released its annual list of tax scams, titled the “Dirty Dozen,” with a warning to taxpayers about aggressive telephone scams and email phishing schemes occurring across the country. The IRS urges taxpayers not to give out any personal financial information or money to people claiming to be from the IRS.

Taxpayers should remember that they are legally responsible for what is on their tax returns, even if it is prepared by someone else, and that illegal scams can lead to significant penalties and interest.

Common Tax Schemes

Aggressive phone scams from callers claiming to be from the IRS have been plaguing taxpayers lately.

Victims are told they owe money to the IRS that must be paid immediately, or that they are entitled to a tax refund. If victims do not cooperate, they are threatened with arrest, deportation or suspension of a driver’s license.

The IRS will never demand immediate payment, ask you to give credit or debit card information over the phone, or threaten you for not paying. These are all red flags and should be reported to the IRS immediately.



Taxpayers need to be on the lookout for fake emails from people “phishing” for personal financial information and for claims that you owe the IRS tax money or that you are entitled to a refund, especially during tax season.

The IRS will never send you an email about a bill or refund out of the blue—a paper notice will always come first.

Taxpayers also need to be aware of identity theft around tax time. Criminals may fraudulently file taxes using someone else’s Social Security number in order to get his or her tax return. Protect your identity by creating strong passwords for any online accounts relating to your taxes or personal information, and, as soon as you receive a tax document, put it in a safe place at home. Check credit reports yearly to ensure your identity has not been stolen.

Where Can I Find Additional Help?

Taxpayers lose millions of dollars each year as a result of tax scams.

To see a full list of the “Dirty Dozen” and what you can do to avoid them, visit the IRS’ website.

More information about tax scams is available on the IRS’ social media sites, including YouTube www.youtube.com/user/irsvideos and Tumblr <http://internalrevenueservice.tumblr.com>; Just search “scam” to find all the scam-related posts.



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