

FRAUD ALERT

February 2019

“Oh oh He’s the Tax Man” **NOT**

The Bucks County Crimes Against Older Adults Task Force would, once again, like to warn residents that we can expect to get more tax related scams in the upcoming months. History has shown that these unscrupulous scam artists will begin contacting residents via phone, email and, in some cases, US mail before the April 15th tax filing deadline. They attempt to make contact in the hopes of tricking people into sharing their Social Security numbers, personal information such as birthdates, family member’s names, household information and credit card numbers. In some cases these scam artists would attempt to get the consumer to buy gift cards to pay their supposed past due tax bill.

These scam artists may threaten that you will be arrested if you don’t comply.

These callers may also say things that are threatening to outright scare people into sending them money.

It’s best to just hang up and not interact with these scam artists as they have been known to become vulgar if you attempt to question or doubt the legitimacy of the call.

These fraudsters use a fake, spoofed number that tricks the caller ID on your phone. In past tax seasons, scammers would use spoofing to make it appear as if they were calling from a 202 Washington, D.C. area code to trick consumers. This would make some people believe that it must be the real IRS calling them.

Below are some suggestions assuring that you do not become a victim of this scam:

If you receive this call, do not panic. Rest assured that the IRS will not initiate first contact via telephone. They will not demand payment and threaten you with jail if you do not comply. The real IRS will NEVER ask you to pay a past due tax bill with a gift card or by wiring money. If you think that you may actually owe the IRS money call the legitimate IRS Helpline @ 800-829-1040. Do NOT call the number these scam artists may leave on your voicemail message or the number showing on your caller ID as that number may be spoofed as well. If you do make the mistake of calling back these scammers, it’s likely that your phone number will then be put on their list of people who may be more likely to fall for their scams. They know that people that are willing to talk with them and listen are more likely to believe their scam. They will think that you are on their hook if you interact with them. Keep in mind that if you do speak with them you could be more likely to be contacted in the future with other scams, so it’s best to keep your guard up for other scams if you have interacted with any of these scam artists.

Do not click on tax emails. Refrain from clicking on emails that purport to contain sensitive information. If you see an email advertising news from tax preparers or another tax program, or from the IRS, go directly to their website instead, to check your account.

File taxes today to prevent scams, and keep an eye out for your return. Many of these scams rely on you not having filed your tax return yet. The deadline to file taxes is April 15, 2019, you can file as early as Jan. 28. Still, many of us wait until the last minute to do so.

Report any suspicious emails directly to phishing@irs.gov You can also call the FTC identity-theft hotline at 1-877-438-4338 to report suspicious activity.

Monthly Fraud Alerts brought to you by:
Bucks County Crimes against Older Adults Task Force

Bucks County District Attorney's Office 215-348-6344	A Woman's Place (AWP) 1-800-220-8116
Bucks County Area Agency on Aging 267-880-5700	Bucks County Office of Consumer Protection 215-348-6060
Bucks County Coroner's Office 267-880-5040	Bucks County Register of Wills 215-348-6265
Network of Victim Assistance (NOVA) 1-800-675-6900	US Dept. of Health and Human Services/OIG 1-800-447-8477

24 - HOUR HOTLINE: 1-800-490-8505