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Dec. 02, 2016



It's the start of the busy holiday season, but the IRS is promoting another cause.

It has just announced, in coordination with its Security Summit partners, that "National Tax Security Awareness Week," will span Monday, December 5 through Friday, December 9 (IR-2016-156, 12/1/16).

During this week, the IRS intends to shed light on scams to watch out for, including cyber attacks, and advise taxpayers about protecting their sensitive information.

It will feature a series of consumer warnings and tips on a daily basis on the [Taxes](#).

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“With holiday shopping underway and the 2017 tax season about to begin in January, we are entering a period where many people will be using sensitive financial and tax data on their computers,” said IRS Commissioner John Koskinen in the press release. “In the months ahead, more than 100 million tax returns will be completed on laptops and desktops by taxpayers and tax professionals, making this the perfect time to take steps to protect your valuable information. As the holiday season approaches, we also encourage everyone to look out for friends and family who may not be tech savvy and may be leaving their computers vulnerable to identity thieves.”

Specifically, the IRS is reminding taxpayers to take the following measures:

- **Always use security software with firewall and anti-virus protections.** Make sure the security software is always turned on and can automatically update. Encrypt sensitive files such as tax records you store on your computer. Use strong passwords.
- **Learn to recognize and avoid phishing emails, threatening phone calls and texts** from thieves posing as legitimate organizations such as your bank, credit card company and government organizations – even the IRS. Don't click on links or download attachments from unknown or suspicious emails.
- **Protect your personal data.** Don't routinely carry your Social Security card, and make sure your tax records are secure. Treat your personal information like you do your money — you wouldn't leave cash lying around, so don't do it with this information.

The IRS wants you to enjoy the holidays, but you must continue to remain vigilant. Expect more pronouncements about ID protection in the New Year.

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