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Isaac M. O'Bannon • Aug. 28, 2014



The Internal Revenue Service continues to warn taxpayers across the country of a series of scam phone calls from people pretending to be IRS officials in order to get sensitive personal information. On Thursday, the agency issued a new consumer alert to provide taxpayers with additional tips to protect themselves.

These callers may demand money or may say you have a refund due and try to trick you into sharing private information. These con artists can sound convincing when

they call. They may know a lot about you, and they usually alter the caller ID to make

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The IRS reminds people that they can know pretty easily when a supposed IRS caller is a fake. Here are five things the scammers often do but the IRS will not do. Any one of these five things is a tell-tale sign of a scam. The IRS will never:

1. Call you about taxes you owe without first mailing you an official notice.
2. Demand that you pay taxes without giving you the opportunity to question or appeal the amount they say you owe.
3. Require you to use a specific payment method for your taxes, such as a prepaid debit card.
4. Ask for credit or debit card numbers over the phone.
5. Threaten to bring in local police or other law-enforcement groups to have you arrested for not paying.

If you get a phone call from someone claiming to be from the IRS and asking for money, here's what you should do:

- If you know you owe taxes or think you might owe, call the IRS at 1.800.829.1040. The IRS workers can help you with a payment issue.
- If you know you don't owe taxes or have no reason to believe that you do, report the incident to the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA) at 1.800.366.4484 or at www.tigta.gov.
- If you've been targeted by this scam, also contact the Federal Trade Commission and use their "FTC Complaint Assistant" at FTC.gov. Please add "IRS Telephone Scam" to the comments of your complaint.

Remember, too, the IRS does not use email, text messages or any social media to discuss your personal tax issue. For more information on reporting tax scams, go to www.irs.gov and type "scam" in the search box.

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