

UBPD - DETECTIVE BUREAU WARNING & ADVISORY

(Sophisticated phone and mail scam targeting taxpayers, including recent immigrants, throughout the country.)

Victims are told they owe money to the IRS and it must be paid promptly through a pre-loaded debit card or wire transfer. If the victim refuses to cooperate, they are then threatened with arrest, deportation or suspension of a business or driver's license. In many cases, the caller becomes hostile and insulting.

FACT: The IRS will not ask for credit card numbers over the phone, nor request a pre-paid debit card or wire transfer.

Scammers use fake names and IRS badge numbers. They generally use common names and surnames to identify themselves.

Scammers may be able to recite the last four digits of a victim's Social Security Number. (Obtained on black-internet sites.)

Scammers spoof the IRS toll-free number on caller ID to make it appear that it's the IRS calling.

Scammers send bogus IRS emails to some victims to support their bogus calls.

Scammers send official looking IRS letters with actual IRS addresses.

Victims hear background noise of other calls being conducted to mimic a call site.

After threatening victims with jail time or driver's license revocation, scammers hang up and others soon call back pretending to be from the local police or DMV, and the caller ID supports their claim.

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

If you know you owe taxes or you think you might owe taxes, call the IRS at 1.800.829.1040. The IRS employees at that line can help you with a payment issue – if there really is such an issue.

If you know you don't owe taxes or have no reason to think that you owe any taxes (for example, you've never received a bill or the caller made some bogus threats as described above), then call and report the incident to the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration at 1.800.366.4484.

If you've been targeted by this scam, you should 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.