

Tax Scams Don't Stop on April 15

You filed your tax return and got your refund, but your phone's caller ID says Internal Revenue Service or you got an e-mail from the IRS. Did you make a mistake on your taxes or is it a scam?

"If you get an unexpected phone call or e-mail from someone claiming to be from the IRS, you should assume it's a scam," said IRS spokesman Michael Devine. "The IRS will mail a written notification of any tax problem, not initiate contact by phone or email."

According to the IRS, scam callers are frequently insulting or hostile - to scare their potential victims. Some demand payment on a pre-paid debit card or by wire transfer.

"If you answer an unexpected phone call from someone claiming to be from the IRS, ask for a call back number and an employee badge number. Then call the IRS at 800-829-1040 to see if the IRS is really trying to contact you," said Devine.

What if you get an e-mail from the IRS instructing you to open an attachment or visit a web site?

The IRS says if you get a 'phishing' email:

- Don't reply, open any attachments or click on any links.
- Do forward the email to phishing@irs.gov. Then delete it.

"The IRS receives thousands of reports every year from taxpayers who receive emails out-of-the-blue claiming to be from the IRS," said Devine. "If you open the attachment, a virus might infect your computer system and criminals may be able to steal your personal information or send more e-mails using your account."