

Sheriff warns of scams circulating locally

(KNZA)--Brown County Sheriff John Merchant is alerting residents of scams circulating locally.

I have had many reports from residents stating they have been contacted by someone posing as someone from Social Security, stating that their Social Security number has been used in the commission of a crime and has been suspended, or was no longer valid, or needed verification in order to received benefits.

Other residents have been reporting IRS scams now that tax season is here. They are stating they are receiving calls from people who represent themselves as IRS employees trying to verify Social Security number, or stating that citizens need to verify their bank account numbers for direct deposit, OR they are being audited and need to provide bank account and personal information, etc.

Another scam is the stimulus scam. Residents are being called by someone who is representing themselves as from the US Treasury and are told their stimulus check is on hold until they can provide bank account numbers so the money can be deposited immediately.

Merchant said be aware that none of the agencies listed will ever contact you by phone wanting your personal information. This does not happen. In most instances, the callers have a very thick foreign accent and when questioned, they argue and become belligerent.

Merchant said these scammers can make any number appear on your caller ID, they can also make any persons or business name show up on your caller ID so do not trust this.

Scammers are trained to obtain information through conversation, so if you do not positively know who you are talking to, hang up immediately. If you do not recognize the number, do not answer. PLEASE REMEMBER-- NEVER GIVE OUT ANY PERSONAL INFORMATION OVER THE PHONE OR COMPUTER.

Merchant said contact your local law enforcement at once if you feel you have become a victim of these scammers.

