

Richfield Police Crime Alert
February 5, 2008

Tax Time Scam:

Many Americans are looking forward to the proposed federal tax rebates that are part of an economic stimulus package. The federal government is expected to offer rebates; however, no law has been passed.

Criminals are already taking advantage of the proposed “rebates.” Scam artists claiming to be from the Internal Revenue Service are using the promise of a rebate as bait:

By telephone Taxpayers are asked for bank account information so that the rebate can be directly deposited; they’re told if they refuse, they won’t be eligible for the rebate.

By e-mail Taxpayers are asked to click on a link to access a refund form and enter personal financial information.

Either way, taxpayers are setting themselves up to be victims of identity theft. Once armed with social security numbers, bank account information and credit card numbers, identity thieves can empty bank accounts, max out credit cards and even open new credit cards.

Remember to always protect your personal information. The IRS, financial institutions and credit card companies don’t call or email people out of the blue. They do not need to as they have your financial information on record.

Anyone who receives a questionable e-mail should not open any accompanying attachments. They should go to www.irs.gov find “How to Protect Yourself from Suspicious E-Mails or Phishing Schemes,” follow the instructions and forward the e-mail to Phishing.

Jury Duty Scams:

This has been verified by the FBI (their link is included below).

Please pass this on to everyone in your email address book. It is spreading fast so be prepared should you get a call. Most of us take summons for jury duty seriously. A new and ominous kind of fraud has surfaced:

The call claims to be a jury coordinator. If you protest that you never received a summons for jury duty, the scammer asks you for your Social Security Number and date of birth so he or she can verify the information and cancel the arrest warrant. Give out any of this information and **BINGO! Your identity was just stolen!** So far this kind of fraud has been reported in 11 states including Oklahoma, Illinois, and Colorado. This (swindle) is particularly insidious because they use intimidation over the phone to try to bully people into giving information by pretending they are with the Court System. **The FBI and the Federal Court System** have issued nationwide alerts on their websites, warning consumers about the fraud.

Snopes site: says this is real fraud

<http://www.snopes.com/crime/fraud/juryduty.asp>

FBI site: warns about the fraud

http://www.fbi.gov/page2/june06jury_scams060206