



# consumer tip

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## Protect Your Identity From Tax Scams

**(Yuma, AZ - February 26, 2013)** Whether consumers have already filed taxes or are in the process of doing so, now is the time to protect against tax scams. Better Business Bureau (BBB) advises consumers to beware of any strange electronic communications about taxes or refunds that appear to purport from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

“During tax season, scam artists target taxpayers by sending out emails intending to pose as the IRS,” said Matthew Fehling, BBB President/CEO. “It is also important to choose a trustworthy tax preparer you can trust and have access to your personal information.”

Identity thieves will impersonate the IRS to ‘phish’ for personal and private information by using technology to their advantage. The emails may state there is a problem with a refund and that confirmation of personal or financial information is required to resolve the issue. Unfortunately, once a consumer verifies the personal information or clicks on a link, which leads to a fake website asking for more information, they are at risk.

BBB offers the following tips on how consumers can prevent falling for a tax scam email and becoming a victim of identity theft:

- **Be wary of emails, phone calls or text messages that claim to be from the IRS.** If the IRS needs to contact you, it will generally do so through mail. Consumers who receive unsolicited email that appears to be from either the IRS or an organization with a similar name, such as the Electronic Federal Tax Payment System (EFTPS), should report it immediately to [phishing@irs.gov](mailto:phishing@irs.gov).

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- **Contact the IRS** directly to verify additional correspondence by locating the nearest local office at [irs.gov](https://irs.gov). There are twelve [IRS offices](#) throughout Arizona.
- **Do not provide any personal information**, click on links or open any attachments if it appears to be a phishing email from the IRS.
- **Start with trust** by selecting a trustworthy tax preparer at [SearchBBB.org](https://SearchBBB.org). Ensure the person helping you file your taxes has a Tax Preparer Identification Number (TPIN). Selecting a reputable tax preparer will help protect your personal information from third parties.

For more consumer tips you can trust, visit our News Center at [www.arizona.bbb.org/bbb-news](https://www.arizona.bbb.org/bbb-news).

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For more information or to request an interview with a BBB spokesperson, contact Janet Torricellas at 928-919-7940 or by email at [jtorricellas@arizonabbb.org](mailto:jtorricellas@arizonabbb.org).

**About BBB Serving Central, Northern & Western Arizona**

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