

NEWS FROM SCDCA

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Tax Time Safety Tips

Columbia, SC...The South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs (SCDCA) is encouraging consumers to be vigilant during the upcoming tax season. As part of Tax Identity Theft Awareness Week (January 26-30), SCDCA offers the following tips:

- ***Watch out for imposter scams.*** SCDCA has received over 200 calls from consumers reporting IRS imposter scams. Consumers are generally told they owe back taxes and threatened with legal action. The IRS will not call about taxes without sending a bill through the mail first.
- ***Use a legitimate tax preparer.*** Tax preparers handle *a lot* of sensitive personal information. Consumers should make sure their preparer is reputable, licensed and has a Preparer Tax Identification Number from the IRS.
- ***E-file safely.*** When filing online, use anti-virus software and ensure the computer is transmitting information via a secure internet connection.
- ***Think twice.*** Whether fielding a cold call, an e-mail or searching for a tax professional, it is always easier to research on the front end, rather than trying to recover money or personal information from a fraudster. When in doubt, hang up and follow up!

Consumers who are victimized by a tax scammer should report to the IRS at 1.800.829.3676 or file a report (Form 3949-A) online at www.irs.gov. Also report to SCDCA's ID Theft Unit by calling toll free at 800-922-1594. SCDCA uses the information to identify emerging scam trends and alert the public on how to avoid becoming a victim.

For more information on finding a preparer and filing securely online, see our Spotlight on taxes <http://www.consumer.sc.gov/Documents/SpotLight/SCDCA%20Spotlight-%20%20Tax%20Scams%202012%20final.pdf> , or visit www.consumer.sc.gov and click News Release & Publications, then SCDCA Spotlight.

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SCDCA aims to protect consumers from inequities in the marketplace through advocacy, complaint mediation, enforcement and education. To file a complaint or get information on consumer issues, visit www.consumer.sc.gov or call toll-free, 1.800.922.1594.

Connect with us:



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