

CONSUMER ALERT

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

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Taxpayers Reporting Fake, Threatening Wisconsin Department of Revenue Calls

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MADISON – Earlier this month, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) warned consumers about the resurgence of fake Internal Revenue Service (IRS) phone calls. In this nationwide scam, callers are threatened by imposter IRS agents who claim they owe back taxes and demand immediate payment over the phone.

Now the Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR) is reporting that a number of taxpayers have received calls over the past couple of weeks that have “spoofed” the phone number for DOR’s Milwaukee office on caller ID displays. These are scammers calling, there is no legitimacy to their claims, and they do not represent DOR despite the caller ID information.

“The Wisconsin Department of Revenue will not call or email you regarding your tax return,” said DOR Secretary Richard Chandler. “Any phone call or email from someone claiming to be the DOR should be an immediate red flag. Do not give these fraudsters any information.”

“Caller ID spoofing is a common characteristic in many phone scams because it allows scammers to misrepresent who they are, who they represent and what number they are actually calling from,” said Frank Frassetto, Administrator for DATCP’s Division of Trade and Consumer Protection. “Never trust your caller ID when you question the legitimacy of a phone call, especially if the caller is demanding money or sensitive information.”

Hang up on any aggressive or threatening call about back taxes. Remember:

- Both the IRS and Wisconsin DOR contact taxpayers about their accounts by mail.
- Neither agency will call you, make threats about your tax liability and demand immediate payment.
- Neither agency will request that you pay your taxes using iTunes or Amazon gift cards, wire transfers, PayPal, prepaid debit cards or reloadable MoneyPak cards.

If you ever question the authenticity of a letter, phone call or email you receive that claims to be from a government agency, contact that agency directly to inquire. Contact the agency using a phone number or email address that you know to be accurate – NOT the contact information provided by the questionable party.

For additional information, visit the Consumer Protection Bureau at <http://datcp.wisconsin.gov>, send an e-mail to datcp hotline@wisconsin.gov or call the Consumer Protection Hotline at 1-800-422-7128.

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