



News

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Summer's "Sizzling" Scams Top Five Local Summer Scams: BBB Offers Tips on How to Avoid Them

Rockford, IL – June 20, 2017 – Fraudsters continue to come up with new schemes to scam consumers and businesses. With the official start of Summer, local data just compiled from the Better Business Bureau serving Chicago and Northern Illinois Scam Tracker shows the hottest summer scams in our region. With this information BBB, has been able to pinpoint the top five summer scams in northern Illinois so you know exactly what to avoid.

Dennis Horton, director of the Rockford Regional Office of the Better Business Bureau says, "We know that scams are cyclical, as an example, every summer we see an increase in employment related scams. With our new data, we are able to better gage the impact of those scams and others."

Number one on the list this summer:

Tax collection scams - *Commonly known as the IRS Scam* - 50% of all reported scams and inquiries fall under this category. While tax scams are nothing new, the various schemes fraudsters are coming up with are new. In the latest twist, the Internal Revenue Service is warning people that scammers have added reference to the automated Electronic Federal Tax Payment System (EFTPS).

Here's how it works:

Scammers claiming to be from the IRS are calling victims and telling them they sent out two certified letters in the mail that were returned as undeliverable. They use this new twist to seem more legitimate because the IRS mails letters to communicate with taxpayers. If you receive a phone call saying mail sent to you from the IRS was undeliverable and your address is still the same as the last tax return you filed, then it's probably a scam.

The IRS (and its authorized private collection agencies) will never:

- Call to demand immediate payment using prepaid debit cards, gift cards or wire transfers.
- Threaten to immediately bring in local police or other law-enforcement groups to have the taxpayer arrested for not paying.
- Demand that taxes be paid without giving the taxpayer the opportunity to question or appeal the amount owed.
- Ask for credit or debit card numbers over the phone.

Other scams on the top five list are:

- 2. Government Grants – Fake calls and notifications saying you have an accepted grant.**
- 3. Employment – Identity and money theft is common attack on job seekers**
- 4. Tech Support – Scareware, Ransomware, and false tech support calls**
- 5. Online Purchases – Everything from fake ads to bogus websites and merchandise**

BBB urges you to familiarize yourself with what schemes are common this time of year and to follow our "[10 Steps to Avoid Scams.](#)"

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