

The Senior Medicare Patrol is.....

LOOKING OUT FOR YOU

DATE: 5/1/16

2016-5

SUBJECT: **IRS WARNS SENIORS—TAX THIEVES NEVER SLEEP!**

On April 18, 2016, tax deadline day, the local Internal Revenue Service (IRS) office went on TV news to warn us: Even after the tax preparation season has ended, scammers may contact you.

- They may claim you have an overdue “tax bill,” which you must pay immediately through a prepaid debit card or wire transfer. Or they may promise you a big refund in order to get personal information from you.
- On the phone they will masquerade as the Internal Revenue Service, using methods like robocalls, spoofing, or fake caller IDs to trick you into believing they are legitimate IRS agents. On the web they trick you into clicking on links that look official. You may become a victim of identity theft when someone posing as you causes great damage to your credit and reputation.
- A worse case scenario is when the IRS tells you they rejected your tax return because someone used your name, Social Security number (also your Medicare number), and counterfeit W-2 forms to file a return in order to collect a refund. You will have to face the harsh reality that you have been victimized and your identity stolen. A local man received such a letter from the IRS. It took him several phone calls and being on-hold for more than 45 minutes when he called IRS to verify his identity.

REMEMBER: Tax thieves don't rest. They will continue to scam seniors long after the filing deadline. Each of us can do our part to help the government reduce the cost of billions of dollars lost to scammers by **protecting** our identities and hard-earned money, **detecting** possible scams, and **reporting** them to the proper authorities.



WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

- If you receive a phone call sounding like one of these scenarios, **HANG UP IMMEDIATELY!** Call the IRS at 1-800-829-1040 or contact the Federal Trade Commission Complaint Assistant at www.FTC.gov and add the words “IRS Telephone Scam” to your report.
 - If you receive a suspicious email, report it to phishing@irs.gov.
- Since your Social Security and Medicare numbers are the same, you may become a victim of medical fraud as well, so call our local Senior Medicare Patrol at 1-800-296-9422 for assistance. For more information about the Senior Medicare Patrol, visit our website at <http://smphawaii.org>.

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