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OPP warn of CRA tax scam

Dufferin OPP have received several complaints of fraudsters running a tax scam. It is tax time again and fraudsters will use this opportunity to attempt to scam consumers and businesses out of their hard earned money.

The most common approach fraudsters' use is impersonating the real Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). Whether by telephone or by email, the pitch involves one the fraudsters are phishing for identification or asking that outstanding taxes be paid by pre-paid debit / credit cards. Threats are made that police will attend and arrest taxpayers and this is false

? Consumers and businesses receive a notification by phone or email that they owe ?back taxes? as the result of an audit. The payment must be made immediately to avoid a fine or the recipient is told there is an outstanding warrant that can be avoided if the payment is made promptly. In many cases, individuals are told they will be deported if the taxes are not paid right away.

Warning sign(s) ? How to protect yourself

? Do not take immediate action. Verify that what you are being told is the truth.

? Ask yourself why the CRA would be asking for personal information over the phone or e-mail that they likely already have on file for you as a taxpayer.

? Contact the CRA to confirm that you in fact owe back taxes, or are entitled to a refund, before providing any personal or banking information.

? For more information about Fraud Scams involving the CRA visit the Canada Revenue Web page at www.cra-arc.gc.ca/scrty/frdprvntn/menu-eng.html

Were you a victim?

Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre Toll-free: 1-888-495-8501; RCMP Secure Sign-In; Local: 1-613-993-2999 (Ottawa); Competition Bureau of Canada Toll-free: 1-800-348-5358