

Senior Citizens Should Be On Alert for Email Scam Offering IRS Refund

Scammers may try to take advantage of economic stimulus program

SeniorJournal.com Jan. 29, 2008 – Senior citizens should be on the alert for an email scam back on the Internet that claims to be from the Internal Revenue Service and promises a tax refund check, if you will just submit the tax refund request. Some may confuse this to be a part of the government's economic stimulus program, which may be why it has emerged again. Part of the economic plan's discussion includes checks to senior citizens on Social Security.

The scam has been hitting email boxes since 2005, when the IRS issued a warning.

The "refund request form" asks for personal information, such as Social Security number and credit card information.

This scheme is an attempt to trick the e-mail recipients into disclosing their personal and financial data. The practice is called "phishing" for information.

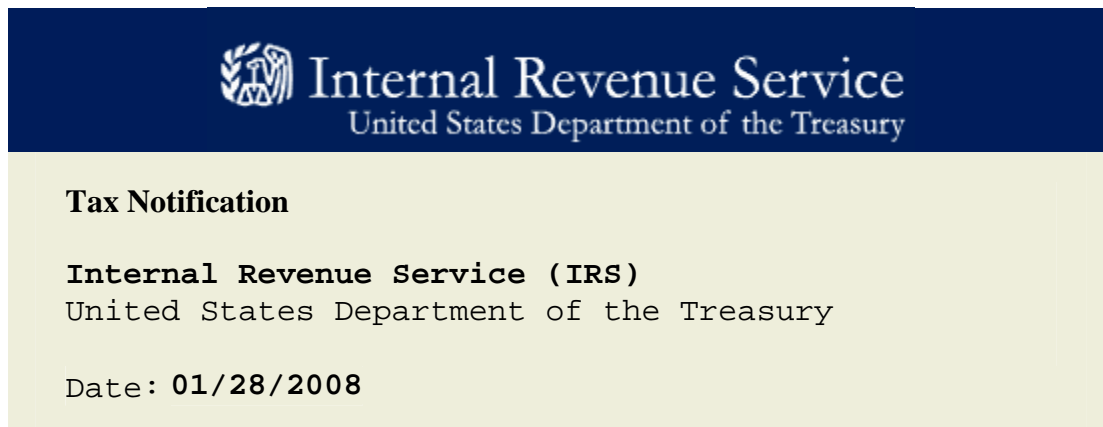
The government program to stimulate the economy, which was recently approved by Congress, involves sending checks to millions of Americans, hoping they will spend the money to help the U.S. economy.

There is a possibility this discussion has motivated the crooks who operate on the Web to bring back this old refund scheme, hoping people will be confused.

There is also a possibility that the email message will be changed in the near future to make it appear more like a part of the government's program. For example, they may change the message to say the government has a check waiting for you but you must confirm your identity.

Those who receive such an email should delete it.

Below is a sample of the email and the message from the IRS issued in 2005



After the last annual calculations of your fiscal activity we have determined that you are eligible to receive a tax refund of **\$134.80**.

Please submit the tax refund request and allow us 6-9 days in order to process it.

A refund can be delayed for a variety of reasons. For example submitting invalid records or applying after the deadline.

To access the form for your tax refund, [click here](#).

Regards,
Internal Revenue Service

Document Reference: (92054568).

IRS Warns of e-Mail Scam about Tax Refunds

IR-2005-136, Nov. 30, 2005

WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service today issued a consumer alert about an Internet scam in which consumers receive an e-mail informing them of a tax refund. The e-mail, which claims to be from the IRS, directs the consumer to a link that requests personal information, such as Social Security number and credit card information.

This scheme is an attempt to trick the e-mail recipients into disclosing their personal and financial data. The practice is called "phishing" for information.

The information fraudulently obtained is then used to steal the taxpayer's identity and financial assets. Generally, identity thieves use someone's personal data to steal his or her financial accounts, run up charges on the victim's existing credit cards, apply for new loans, credit cards, services or benefits in the victim's name and even file fraudulent tax returns.

The bogus e-mail, which claims to come from "tax-refunds@irs.gov" tells the recipient that he or she is eligible to receive a tax refund for a given amount. It then says that, to access a form for the tax refund, the recipient must use a link contained in the e-mail. The link then asks for the personal and financial information.

The IRS does not ask for personal identifying or financial information via

unsolicited e-mail. Additionally, taxpayers do not have to complete a special form to obtain a refund.

If you receive an unsolicited e-mail purporting to be from the IRS, take the following steps:

- Do not open any attachments to the e-mail, in case they contain malicious code that will infect your computer.
- Contact the IRS at 1-800-829-1040 to determine whether the IRS is trying to contact you about a tax refund.

The IRS has seen numerous attempts over the years to defraud the public and the federal government through a variety of schemes, including abusive tax avoidance transactions, identity theft, claims for slavery reparations, frivolous arguments and more. More information on these schemes may be found on the criminal enforcement page at IRS.gov.

Related Link:

- [Criminal enforcement](#)
- [Compliance and enforcement](#)
- [Scams/consumer alerts](#)
- [Identity theft](#)