## The IRS Will Not Call and Threaten You

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MADISON – Despite a recent lull, fake Internal Revenue Service (IRS) phone calls are back. This nationwide scam appeared to take a temporary break following the crackdown on a foreign call center last year, but the Consumer Protection Hotline at the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) has recently received a number of reports of these types of scam attempts.

DATCP asks Wisconsin residents to watch for phone calls demanding payment or threatening legal action for unpaid taxes and to hang up on these scammers. Given that the tax season is about to wrap up, consumers should be on guard against calls that use this as part of their ploy.

The best protection anyone can have is the knowledge that a threatening call about unpaid taxes is fake...period. Similar scam calls may claim to be from the United States Treasury. Spread the word about this to all of your friends and family members.

Fear-based tactics are a common element of these so-called "government imposter" phone scam pitches. Callers often make specific threats about imminent arrest by law enforcement, loss of a driver's license, or even deportation. Put simply, phone threats from the "IRS" are scams. To protect yourself and your family, remember these simple truths:

- The IRS contacts taxpayers about their accounts by mail.
- The IRS will never call you, make threats about your tax liability and demand immediate payment.
- The IRS will never 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.

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

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