New Tax Preparation Scam Targets Elderly - An ACCESS Fraud Alert

August 30, 2011 â€“ The IRS has issued a warning about a tax preparation scam that is targeting elderly victims in the Midwest. Victims are being told that for a preparation fee they can file a tax return and get a large tax refund by claiming credits and deductions which are not actually available to them.

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s.type = 'text/javascript';
s.src = 'http://widgets.digg.com/buttons.js';
s1.parentNode.insertBefore(s, s1);
})();

The criminals involved in this scam are being fairly brazen. They have been circulating flyers and posting information on bulletin boards in community centers and at other locations frequented by the elderly. This approach makes them look more legitimate and could mislead victims into believing that these facilities are actually endorsing their services.

Those who fall victim are billed a filing fee. It is only after their false returns are filed with the IRS and rejected that they learn they have been victimized. By that time, the person who actually prepared the tax return is long gone.

This scam first appeared in Erie, PA and quickly moved to the State of Ohio. There is absolutely no barrier to entry for anyone willing to victimize the elderly so it is likely to continue to spread to the rest of the country.

Anyone who believes they have been victimized in this scam, or who comes across someone they believe could be running a similar scam is urged to call the IRS Taxpayer Assistance Center at (800) 829-1040.

To date, there have been no reported cases of identity theft from this scam but it is worth noting that anyone preparing tax payers would have access to the victimsâ€™ Social Security Number, address and date of birth. That is all the information needed to assume someone elseâ€™s identity. Because of this, victims should place a fraud alert on their credit file and, if they have no need for instant access to credit, should seriously consider freezing their credit file.

byJim Malmberg
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