

News Release
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Innisfail RCMP warn public about continuing tax scams

Innisfail RCMP have received a number of complaints this week from area residents who have received phone calls from scammers claiming to be calling from Canada Revenue Agency. The callers claim that the person they have contacted owes money in taxes. Several people reported receiving two or more phone calls from the scammers, who have become increasingly aggressive in demanding payment.

Unfortunately, this despicable scam resurfaces across the country on a regular basis, and has been prevalent in Innisfail over the past month. RCMP would like to remind citizens of a few safety tips:

- No legitimate government agency or business will demand payment in gift cards or prepaid credit cards. Only scammers use this untraceable payment method.
- If you receive a call from someone claiming you owe money, independently verify the information by hanging up, looking up Canada Revenue Agency (or the appropriate agency) and calling them directly. Do not call back to a number given out by the person calling you.
- By using “number spoofing,” scammers can make it look like their call is coming from a local number or the number of a business or agency, thus misleading you as to where they are located.

In other twists on this scam, callers may claim to represent Citizenship and Immigration Canada and claim the intended victim owes “immigration fees,” or target small businesses and claim to represent a utility company demanding overdue electricity or gas payments – again, usually in gift cards or prepaid credit cards.

The best protection from scammers is to learn how to resist being pushed into a decision regardless of how persuasive or aggressive the scammer may be. Arm yourself and the vulnerable people in your life by learning how to recognize and protect yourself from fraud: www.antifraudcentre.ca.

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