

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM BEING A VICTIM OF TAX FRAUD - Knowledge is Power. Educate yourself

(HALDIMAND COUNTY, ON) - The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) Haldimand County Detachment is reminding the public to always protect their personal information and be extra vigilant to avoid being a victim of fraud with the tax season upon us.

Every year, thousands of Canadians fall victim to fraud amassing losses in the millions of dollars. Regardless of age, gender and location, everyone can take basic steps to better protect themselves from becoming victims of fraud. Some basic tips include never giving out personal information at your door, over the phone, through social media, or on dating websites.

In the typical (Canada Revenue Agency) CRA scam, the criminals extort money from their victims by telephone, mail, text message or email, a fraudulent communication that claims to be from the Canada Revenue Agency requesting personal information such as a social insurance number, credit card number, bank account number, or passport number.

A new twist is that fraudsters will leave a pre-recorded, clear message on your voicemail impersonating the real CRA. Fraudsters are either [phishing](#) for your identification or asking that outstanding taxes be paid by a money service business or by pre-paid debit/credit cards. They may insist that this personal information is needed so that the taxpayer can receive a refund or a benefit payment.

Cases of fraudulent communication could also involve threatening or coercive language to scare individuals into paying fictitious debt to the CRA. Other communications such as texting, urge taxpayers to visit a fake CRA website where the taxpayer is then asked to verify their identity by entering personal information.

Before you respond to any type of communication, think first that this is a scam. Individuals should never respond to these fraudulent communications nor click on any of the links provided.

Here are some warning signs:

- Urgency-- The scammer always makes the request sound very urgent, which may cause the victim to not verify the story. For example, they may say "*the police are on their way to arrest you.*"
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- Request for Money Transfer-- Money is usually requested to be sent by a money transfer company such as Money Gram, Western Union or even through your own bank institution.
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The CRA will never request by email, text or phone, any personal information such as passport, credit card or bank account information.

To avoid becoming a victim, police advise you to hang up, check and verify the information with CRA by calling a trusted phone number in which you have found and not the number provided by the caller.

OPP is urging the public to educate themselves on fraud prevention. Knowledge is power. The more you know will significantly reduce the risk of you becoming a victim.

More information on fraud can be found in The Little Black Book of Scams on the Competition Bureau of Canada website and also on the Haldimand County website.

If you or someone you know suspect they've been a victim of the CRA scam, check with a Canada Revenue Agency official, and contact your local police service and the [Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre](#), Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS), or online at <https://www.tipsubmit.com/start.htm>

OPP YouTube [video](#) (English)

OPP YouTube [video](#) (French)

[Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre](#)

[Competition Bureau of Canada](#)

[The Little Black Book of Scams](#)

"Recognize, Reject and Report Fraud"

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