

Media Release

Yavapai County Sheriff's Office

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The score: Potential IRS Scam Victim-1(Won) / Scammer- 0
Quick follow-up by YCSO deputy stops \$1300 payment to Scam Suspect

Earlier this month, a 33-year-old Yavapai County resident called YCSO to report she had been victimized by scammers representing themselves as IRS agents.

The timeline – At about 3 pm on this March day, the victim received a phone message asking her to call a specific number (202-599-XXXX) and speak to an IRS agent. When she returned the phone call, a man answered and identified himself as IRS agent “Robert Wilson” and provided a badge number. A female, who also identified herself as an IRS agent, joined the conversation. The victim was told she was in violation of a certain IRS code and could be arrested if the problem was not resolved.

The “IRS agents”/scammers explained she owed \$3800 based on an audit review of 2007 to 2011 tax returns and if was not paid today, the Sheriff's Office would send someone to arrest her. Under fear of arrest, the victim asked what she could do. The scammers told her she needed to plead for forgiveness and was instructed to write a statement apologizing for her mistake and ask to cancel the warrant to avoid court. She was then told to read the statement over the phone so a recording of it could be played for the Judge handling her case.

In the meantime, the scammers instructed her to wire the money she owed to agent “Wilson.” After explaining that she only had a portion of the cash amount demanded, the scammers directed her to wire this amount immediately. She went to a local supermarket and wired \$1300. Throughout the conversation, the scammers told her not to hang up indicating they would remain on the phone to confirm the money had been sent.

After the transaction was completed, the scammers directed her to send the balance ASAP. She told them she would try and began driving to Prescott in hopes of accessing additional funds. During the drive, she spoke with her husband by phone about the ordeal and he told her it was a scam. She then drove directly to the Prescott Sheriff's Office to file a report.

After hearing her story, the reporting deputy immediately drove to the involved supermarket and checked the status of the wire transfer. The store manager discovered that the money had not been collected by the receiver which allowed an opportunity to stop payment. On behalf of the victim, the transfer was stopped by the deputy. The victim later drove to the market to complete necessary paperwork and recover her money.

YCSO and its law enforcement partners have sent numerous media/community alerts regarding this scam during the last couple of years. We will continue to do so as long as the IRS scam remains a problem in this community. As before, we asked that those who read this information please share with family and friends who might otherwise not receive/read such notices:

Remember, the IRS will NOT:

Call you to demand immediate payment. *The IRS will not call you if you owe taxes without first sending you a bill in the mail.*

Demand that you pay taxes and not allow you to question or appeal the amount you owe.

Require that you pay your taxes a certain way. For instance, require that you pay with a prepaid debit card.

Ask for your credit or debit card numbers over the phone.

Threaten to bring in police or other agencies to arrest you for not paying.

Further information is available from the IRS – please click on this link for a newsletter issued yesterday:

<https://www.irs.gov/uac/Newsroom/Consumer-Alert-Scammers-Change-Tactics-Once-Again>

Citizens can contact the Yavapai County Sheriff's Office with information or questions at 928-771-3260 or the YCSO website:
www.ycsoaz.gov