



SCAMS ARE EVERYWHERE! Here are few scams making the rounds in Snohomish County:

The IRS Scam: Someone claiming to be an IRS agent calls saying you owe back taxes. These scammers can seem incredibly convincing, as they often have some of your personal data (e.g. last four digits of your social security number, home address). Some scammers will mail what looks like authentic IRS documents and ask you to fill in the missing information. **What to do:** Hang up (or throw the fake mailer away) and contact the IRS directly to verify that you owe back taxes.

The Warrant/Jury Duty Scam: The caller claims to be a deputy or police officer and says you have an outstanding warrant (most often for missing jury duty). The caller then says to you must have your warrant “lifted” over the phone or police will come to your location and arrest you. The scammer attempts to bully the money out of you by having you purchase a pre-paid cash card and providing the card numbers over to the phone to them. **What to do:** Hang up and call 911 and check if you have an outstanding warrant on-line.

The Package Delivery Scam: Someone claiming to be from a delivery company calls you saying that they have a package on the way. A short time later, someone shows up with a gift package at your door. They will not know who sent you the package if you ask. If you accept the package, you will be asked to pay a “verification fee.” The driver then produces a hand held card scanner to swipe your credit or debit card. **What to do:** Shut the door and call 911. If you think you may have a package on its way to your home, check with the delivery service (almost all have on-line package tracking).

The Computer Virus Scam: A caller claims to be an customer service representative with a software company (most commonly Microsoft, Apple, and HP). The representative claims he has found “infected files” on your computer and

aggressively attempts to sell you a tech support plan that can cost anywhere from \$140-\$380). **What to do:** Hang up. Never pay for any service or fee to someone who calls you. If you think you have a virus or have a question, call the customer service number or tech support listed on the company's official website.

The “We are having an issue with your bank account/credit card” Scam: You receive a convincing text message, phone call, or letter from your bank claiming they are having “issues” with your account. They will ask for your account information. **What to do:** Hang up and contact your bank directly.

The Door-to-Door Salesman Scam: The scam that's been around for generations, this one involves someone coming to your door selling magazine subscriptions or raffle tickets for a worthy cause (e.g. youth groups, oversees troops, religious organizations). In addition to taking your money, the suspects are often using this opportunity to “case” your house for a future burglary. **What to do:** Shut the door and call 911. If you wish to make

a charitable gift, go directly to the charity of your choice either on-line or in person.

The Romance Scam: An on-line announcement provides you with an easy-to-fill-out petition to be submitted to dating sites such as Match.com, eHarmony, etc. These petitions contain the fields that scammers use for identity theft and fraud. Targets for this scam most often are older adults and widowers. **What to do:** Never provide too much personal information (e.g. your last name, your place of work, your home address) on any dating sites. Be wary of suitors who ask for any of this information too quickly.

The Debt Collector Scam: You receive an alarming phone call you that your child, grandchild, niece, nephew, etc. has an emergency in a foreign country and needs money for medical expenses, bail, etc. Scammers ask you to wire money, send a prepaid card or give your credit card number immediately. **What to do:** Hang up. It is illegal for a debt collector to tell you that someone else, even a relative, has a debt.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Legitimate government agencies, nonprofits, or companies will never call and demand payment or personal information (credit card/bank account/social security numbers) over the phone. If something sounds too good to be true, it probably is.



Snohomish County Sheriff's Office

For a current list of scams and what to do, go to:
<http://ssnoccrimewatch.blogspot.com/search/label/Scam>

To report a crime, or if you are victim of a scam, call 911.