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TAX REBATE PHISHING SCAMS SURFACE DURING TAX SEASON

RICHMOND, VA The announcement of nationwide tax rebates has presented a new opportunity for white collar crime and fraud this tax season. In a telephone- based phishing scam, someone claiming to represent the IRS is calling consumers and telling them they're eligible for sizable tax rebates if they file their taxes early. The caller then states that he needs the target's bank account information so the rebate can be directly deposited. If the target refuses, he is told that he cannot receive the rebate.

Cyber-savvy thieves are also trolling the internet in hopes of 'baiting' consumers with cleverly-designed scams that also purport to originate with the IRS. One such scam comes in the form of a scare-tactic designed to get almost anyone's attention. It notifies the would-be victim that his or her tax return will be audited. Mirroring the IRS website, instructions are given to click through a series of links to complete forms with personal and account information - precisely the kind of information a scammer needs to commit identity theft.

Your best defense against these scams is self-defense: always delete any unsolicited spam e-mail without opening it. And remember, the IRS will never ask to verify personal financial information over the phone.

About NW3C

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