

The Watchdog | Missouri income tax phone call seeking credit card info is a scam

The problem

Lea Arreola of Independence reports receiving several calls from someone claiming to represent the state of Missouri who says she is owed a \$3,000 income tax refund.

All she has to do is hand over the name of her credit or debit card and the expiration date, but not the card number. The caller says he'll deposit the money in her account.

The mystery caller provides a "federal ID number" and a mailing address in Washington state. He says the state is doing it this way because people haven't gotten their checks in the past.

She smells a scam, and so does the Watchdog.

The answer

As usual, the Watchdog's nose knows.

"Yes, this is a scam," said Missouri Department of Revenue spokesman Ted Farnen.

No one from the department would ever ask for credit card information in relation to a tax refund. And when the department does require a credit card, it uses a third party vendor.

No one with the department, Farnen stresses, will cold-call you asking for your credit card number. So if somebody does, don't give it to them.

Farnen referred the matter to the department's criminal investigations bureau, which hasn't received any recent reports of such scams. Unfortunately, he says, swindles like these can be hard to track down.

The Watchdog generally avoids such scams by refusing to carry a credit card — or pay taxes.

<http://www.kansascity.com/2011/04/28/2834308/the-watchdog-missouri-income-tax.html#storylink=misearch>

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