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**It's Always Phishing Season:  
Don't Get Hooked by E-mail Tax Scams**

*By Nebraska Attorney General Jon Bruning*

About this time each year, Nebraskans collect their paperwork and prepare to file their taxes. Likewise, scammers adjust their tactics and look for ways to get your personal information and steal your money. This year, a new tax e-mail scam has arrived in Nebraska inboxes.

People of our state work hard for their money and expect to pay people their due. Unfortunately, scam artists are always looking for ways to use those values against you.

*Here's how the e-mail tax scam works:*

- Consumers receive an e-mail that appears to be sent from the IRS warning them that they have not submitted their W-2 form and are in violation of deadlines.
- The e-mail is embedded with a link or has an attachment that allows the consumer to submit the requested information.
- An official-looking form is opened when the link or attachment is opened.
- Consumers fill in the form, thinking they are complying with IRS requirements.
- Scammers get the consumers' personal information, including Social Security number, which can be used for identity theft.

If you receive an e-mail from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) asking for W-2 or other personal information, delete it. Remember, W-2 forms are submitted by employers, not taxpayers.

When scam artists pose as legitimate organizations to steal identities over e-mail, it's called phishing. To avoid becoming a victim of a phishing scheme, remember that the IRS does not communicate with taxpayers or request personal information via e-mail. Treat unsolicited e-mail requests for financial information or other personal data as suspicious, and check your monthly credit card and bank statements for unusual activity or unapproved transactions.

If you suspect that you or someone you know has been a victim of a scam or identity theft, contact our Consumer Protection Division at (800) 727-6432 or file a complaint online at [www.ago.ne.gov](http://www.ago.ne.gov).