

# **PUBLIC INFORMATION RELEASE**

**Owatonna Police Department  
204 East Pearl Street  
Owatonna, MN 55060**



## **For Release Immediately**

August 17, 2018

**Keith E. Hiller  
CHIEF OF POLICE**

## **For Further Information Contact**

Captain Eric Rethemeier

507-774-7207

Today, the Owatonna Police Department and the Rice/Steele 911 have been received an unusually large number of calls from citizens reporting receiving calls from the IRS threatening arrest for unpaid taxes—this is a scam.

Callers claim to be IRS employees, using fake names and bogus IRS identification badge numbers. They may know a lot about their targets, and they usually alter the caller ID to make it look like the IRS is calling.

Victims are told they owe money to the IRS and it must be paid promptly through a gift card or wire transfer. Victims may be threatened with arrest, deportation or suspension of a business or driver's license. In many cases, the caller becomes hostile and insulting. Victims may be told they have a refund due to try to trick them into sharing private information. If the phone isn't answered, the scammers often leave an "urgent" callback request.

Please know that the IRS doesn't:

- Call to demand immediate payment using a specific payment method such as a prepaid debit card, gift card or wire transfer. Generally, the IRS will first mail you a bill if you owe any taxes.
- Threaten to bring in local police or other law-enforcement groups to have you arrested for not paying.
- Demand payment without giving you the opportunity to question or appeal the amount they say you owe.
- Ask for credit or debit card numbers over the phone.

If you receive a call from someone purporting to be the IRS, it is highly likely a scam and you're better to hang up.

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