



An Important Consumer Protection Update *from*

ASSEMBLYWOMAN *Mary Beth*
WALSH

New York State Assembly
Albany, NY 12248

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HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM COMMON CONSUMER SCAMS

Phone scams can come in a variety of forms, a few include:

The IRS Scam- is a telephone scam in which scammers call pretending to be the Internal Revenue Service looking to collect unpaid taxes. Typically, a recorded message is played which asks the resident to call a contact number. After calling that number, the resident will be asked for personal information to prevent a lawsuit from being filed as well as money to pay a fee. Again, THIS IS A SCAM.

The IRS will never:

- Call to demand immediate payment, nor call about taxes owed without having mailed a bill
- Demand taxes be paid without giving the taxpayer the opportunity to ask questions
- Require you to use a specific payment type, such as a prepaid debit card
- Ask for card numbers over the phone
- Threaten to bring in local law enforcement for non-payment

Gift Card Scam- If a person calls and tells you that you have to settle a debt or pay them by buying a gift card at a store, IT'S A SCAM, DON'T DO IT.

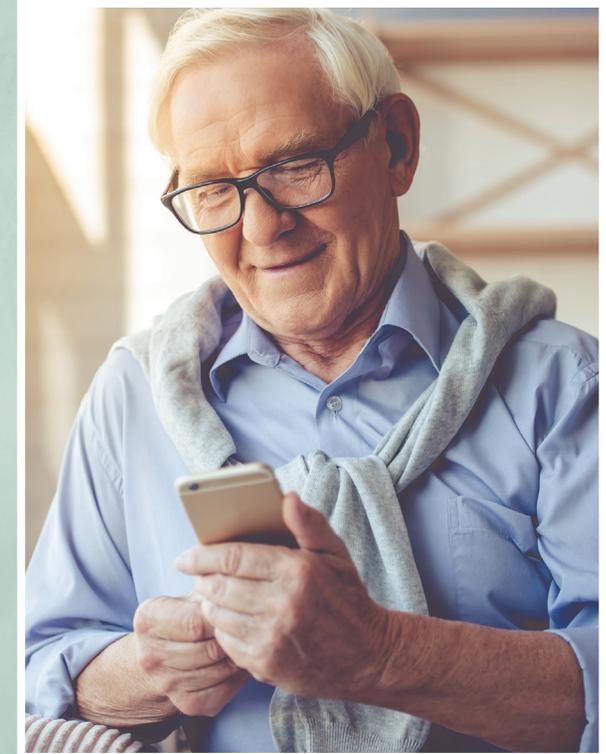
Contest/Vacation Scam- another phone scam in which residents are called and told they have won a contest or vacation. Residents are then pressured into divulging their address and contact information. Be advised that if you have not entered a contest, you cannot win: THIS IS ALSO A SCAM.

Avoid being victimized by:

- Resisting the pressure to act quickly
- Asking for a name and phone number you can call
- Contacting my office to make sure you don't get scammed
- Contacting law enforcement

If you receive a phone call about a utility bill and they ask for a credit card or prepaid debit card, ask for a name, address and callback number and call your utility provider to check.

If you receive a phone call or email asking you to send funds for a family member or loved one who has been hospitalized or jailed, be sure to ask for their name and follow up to ensure this is not a fraudulent request.



Visit: <https://ag.ny.gov/consumer-frauds/tips> for even more tips and information on consumer fraud, or call the consumer helpline (1-800-771-7755) for assistance if you feel as though you have fallen victim to a scam of any kind.



ASSEMBLYWOMAN *Mary Beth*
WALSH

For more information on this or any other state matter, please contact our district office:
199 Milton Avenue, Suite 3-4, Ballston Spa, NY 12020
518-884-8010 • walshm@nyassembly.gov