

Beware of phony IRS e-mails, it's a scam

by Monica Mendoza

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Some Colorado Springs residents have received an e-mail notice from the IRS in recent days saying they are eligible for a refund.

Sounds good, but it's a scam.

The IRS does not initiate communication with tax payers by e-mail, said Cheryl Solze, senior tax manager at Stockman Kast Ryan + Co., certified public accountants in Colorado Springs.

"People see that (refund) and think, oh, my gosh, I need to respond," Solze said.

Other residents are receiving phony IRS notices that say, "We are unable to process your tax return." That e-mail asks the receiver to send in a copy of state or government identification.

The scam is called phishing and involves unsolicited e-mail or websites that pose as legitimate sites to lure unsuspecting victims to provide personal and financial information.

The phony IRS e-mails have arrived in recent days, which make them seem legitimate because people are waiting for or receiving notices now from their April 15 tax filings.

If the IRS needs to reach a tax payer, it will initiate contact by letter or telephone, Solze said.

Her advice: if you get an e-mail claiming to be from the IRS, do not reply. Instead, call your accountant and then [report the scam](#).

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