

From: Attorney General John Kroger <attorneygeneral@doj.state.or.us>
Sent: Monday, April 02, 2012 10:48 AM
To:
Subject: Scam Alert: Bogus Tax Prep



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ATTORNEY GENERAL'S
SCAM ALERT

A Consumer Protection Alert from Oregon Attorney General John Kroger

Dear ,

Thank you again for joining the [Oregon Scam Alert Network](#). Please feel free to forward this email and encourage your family members, friends and colleagues to join the network too.

SCAM ALERT: BOGUS TAX PREP

En Espanol: [El Procurador General Kroger Advierte Sobre Estafas Preparadores de Impuestos](#)

With tax season upon us Attorney General John Kroger warns Oregonians to steer clear of

scam artists looking to cash-in on tax season. The overwhelming majority of Oregon tax preparers provide honest and valuable services to their clients. Nonetheless, whether it is in person, online or via email, there are con artists who market themselves as tax practitioners - but are only out to steal your money.

In the Latino community "notarios" have been known to offer tax preparation services and advice for which they are not licensed to provide. For more information about notario fraud please visit [Avoiding Scams Against Immigrants](#) / [Cómo Evitar Las Estafas Contra Inmigrantes](#) from the Federal Trade Commission.

Fake tax preparers employ a number of fraudulent tactics, including manipulating figures to claim inflated expenses, false deductions, unallowable credits or excessive exemptions. When the fraud is detected, however, it is the taxpayer - not the return preparer - who can suffer the consequences, which can include paying additional taxes, plus interest and other penalties.

Under both state and federal law, all paid tax practitioners must possess a Personal Tax Identification Number issued by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and enter it on the returns he or she prepares. This includes attorneys, CPAs, enrolled agents and unenrolled tax preparers. Anyone who prepares personal income tax returns for compensation in Oregon must also be licensed by the state Board of Tax Practitioners.

Attorney General Kroger offers the following advice to Oregonians seeking professional help this tax season:

- ALWAYS verify that your tax preparer is properly licensed by the Oregon Board of Tax Practitioners at: www.oregon.gov/otpb.
- Never give out personal information such as your Social Security number, bank account or mortgage receipt to a tax preparer unless you know they are licensed.
- Be wary of tax preparers who promise larger than normal refunds or a greater refund than their competitors.
- Don't fall for any solicitations that imply credits or refunds are available without proof of eligibility.

- Do not sign your return unless it contains a valid Personal Tax Identification Number.
- Avoid preparers who base their fee on a percentage of your income or a percentage of your refund or who require you to split the refund to pay their preparation fee.

Tax evasion is a federal felony, punishable by five years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine. If you or someone you know has fallen victim to a tax preparer scam, contact the [Oregon Department of Justice Consumer Hotline](#) at 1-877-877-9392 or the Oregon Board of Tax Practitioners at 503-378-4034.

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