



CITY OF EDMONDS

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POLICE DEPARTMENT • AN ACCREDITED LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEWS RELEASE #1

Date: February 4, 2015

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The Edmonds Police Department wants to advise the community of an ongoing fraud scam with a different twist. Yesterday, February 3, 2015 at about 3:00pm, Edmonds Police were dispatched to the Safeway store at 23632 Hwy 99. Safeway employees became suspicious when the victim, a 54 year old female resident of Mountlake Terrace, came into purchase \$2400 in prepaid credit cards to pay IRS for an outstanding tax bill. The victim who had earlier purchased \$3000 in prepaid credit cards from a different Safeway had been directed to the Edmonds Safeway by the suspect to purchase the remaining amount to pay off her “tax bill”. The suspect told the victim that if she didn’t pay her bill immediately that detectives would come to her house and arrest her.

As Officers talked to the victim, the suspect continued to call the victim, this time using a computer program to display the victim’s daughter’s phone number. The same caller/suspect now stated that they had the victim’s daughter held hostage and that if the victim didn’t pay the money they would kill her. Officers quickly determined that the daughter was in no danger and this was just part of the scam. Officers confronted the man, who spoke with a heavy accent, over the phone. Thanks to the quick thinking of the Safeway store employees and officers on scene they were able to cancel the previously purchased credit cards the victim had purchased, saving her \$3000.00.

It’s unknown how the victim was selected by the suspect(s). The call likely came from outside of the country and there is no suspect information.

The Edmonds Police Department wants to advise the public that the IRS does not try to collect back taxes over the phone and does not use detectives to enforce this. Also be aware that calling the number back could result in very high long distance charges (up to \$50/min.).

If someone receives a similar calls as this victim hang up and call 9-1-1. If there are any questions for the IRS call 1-800-829-1040, or go online to the IRS web site, www.irs.gov or contact your local IRS office.

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