



# Simsbury Police Department

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## Spring Scam Update

Tax day is behind us, but that doesn't mean that opportunistic scammers have stopped trying to victimize individuals under the guise of the International Revenue Service.

An aggressive and sophisticated phone scam targeting taxpayers has been making the rounds throughout the country. Callers claim to be employees of the IRS, but are not. They use fake names and fake IRS identification badge numbers. They can even alter the caller ID to make it look like the IRS is calling

Note that the IRS will never:

- Call to demand immediate payment, nor will the agency call about taxes owed without first having mailed you a bill
- Demand that you pay taxes without giving you the opportunity to question or appeal the amount they say you owe
- Require you to use a specific payment method for your taxes, such as a prepaid debit card
- Ask for credit or debit card numbers over the phone
- Threaten to bring in local police or other law-enforcement groups to have you arrested for not paying.

For more details on this ongoing scam, see: <http://www.irs.gov/uac/Tax-Scams-Consumer-Alerts>

Additionally, spring has also brought with it home improvement scams; specifically Solar Energy scams. Fraudulent contractors prey on those unfamiliar with solar energy products. While there are many state and federal rebates that offer a reduction in the initial costs of solar products; consumers should be wary of the less than reputable and unqualified contractors who offer these services

The better business bureau (BBB) offers the following tips when investing in solar energy:

**Learn how solar energy works.**

For example, panels facing south that receive maximum sun exposure during the hours of 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., will provide the greatest amount of energy. You save more when you have excess energy that can then be credited.

**Is solar energy right for you?**

Conduct a self-energy audit. If your monthly bill is less than \$100.00, consider other ways to save energy that costs less.

**Make sure your roof is in good repair.**

Even though a properly installed solar system will not damage your roof, make sure your roof is in good condition before you begin the installation to avoid any future problems.

**Consider all costs.**

Determine if the benefits and savings outweigh the cost of maintenance and upkeep over the long run.

**Check state and federal incentives.**

State and federal programs can save you as much as 50 percent on installation costs. Be sure to understand the terms and conditions of the incentive programs and conduct your own research before signing a contract with an installer.

**Be wary of installers that promise no out of pocket costs.**

Be leery if an installer suggests obtaining credit for the full amount of the system even though they are promising very low or no costs due to rebates.

***If you have questions about a scam or feel that you have been victimized, please do not hesitate to contact the Simsbury Police Department at (860) 658-3100.***