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## **Phishing and Other Schemes Using the IRS Name**

[www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)

The IRS periodically alerts taxpayers to schemes that fraudulently use the IRS name, logo or Web site clone to gain access to consumers' financial information in order to steal their identity and assets.



The scams may take place through e-mail, fax or phone. When they take place via e-mail, they are called "phishing" scams. The IRS website has information that can help you protect yourself from tax scams of all kinds. Search the site using

the term: phishing.

The following is a list of known schemes:

- The IRS-impersonation telephone scheme, in which callers may demand money or say the taxpayer has a refund due and try to trick them into sharing private information, is continuing. These callers may know a lot about the taxpayer they call and usually alter the caller ID to make it look like the IRS is calling. They use fake names and bogus IRS identification badge numbers. If the taxpayer hasn't answered, they often leave an "urgent" callback request. However, there are ways to spot when a supposed IRS caller is a fake.
- The IRS warned consumers about a sophisticated phone scam targeting taxpayers, including recent immigrants, throughout the country. Victims are told they owe money to the IRS and it must be paid promptly through a pre-loaded debit card or wire transfer. If the victim refuses to cooperate, uses

a website that mimics the IRS e-Services online registration page. The actual IRS e-Services page offers web-based products for tax preparers, not the general public. The phony web page looks almost identical to the real one. The IRS gets many reports of fake websites like this. Criminals use these sites to lure people into providing personal and financial information that may be used to steal the victim's money or identity. The address of the official IRS website is [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov). **Don't be misled by sites claiming to be the IRS but ending in .com, .net, .org or other designations instead of .gov.**

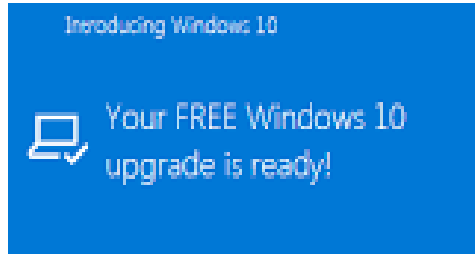


- A combination email and text message phishing scam that appears to be from the IRS lures people to a malicious website. The false message informs recipients that a federal tax transaction recently initiated from their checking account was (rejected by the Electronic Federal Tax Payment System). The scammer's true email address is masked as a legitimate IRS account ([irs@service.govdelivery.com](mailto:irs@service.govdelivery.com)). Do not fall for this scam – the IRS does not initiate contact with taxpayers by email or social media to request personal or financial information.

# Microsoft Wants You to Update to Windows 10

[www.zdnet.com](http://www.zdnet.com)

In case you haven't noticed, Microsoft really wants you to use [Windows 10](#). It says its new operating system, which Microsoft launched last summer, has faster startup times and is safer than Windows 7 and Windows 8.1, and it's been widely embraced.



Just a few months after launch, in October, Microsoft said 110 million people had signed up for

Windows 10, for free. Initially, you could pre-order a Windows 10 upgrade, which you'd later be prompted to download, if you wanted to.

But Microsoft has been getting a little pushier about getting you to sign up since then. That's according to plan. As it spelled out on its blog last year, it then started suggesting Windows 10 as an "optional update."

Now, as of earlier this week, Windows 10 is a "recommended update." What does that mean?

"Depending upon your Windows Update settings, this may cause the upgrade process to automatically initiate on your device," according to Microsoft's Windows blog. "Before the upgrade changes the operating system of your device, you will be clearly prompted to choose whether or not to continue. And, of course, if you choose to upgrade, then **you will have 31 days to roll back to your previous Windows version**, if you don't love it."

Microsoft keeps a copy of your previous Windows version for those 31 days, in case you want to go back to Windows 7 or [Windows 8.1](#). Note: If you set up your version of Windows to automatically receive updates, which you should for Internet security updates, you may see that an automatic Windows 10 download begins, even if you didn't ask for it. It won't download completely, without your "OK."

*If you need help with going back to a previous version of Windows, contact Park Place Computers.*

## Decorah Eagle

The Decorah eagle has started laying eggs and you can watch the eagle and, eventually, the little eaglets live at [www.ustream.tv/decoraheagles](http://www.ustream.tv/decoraheagles). Also at this site you will find facts about the eaglet hatching in previous years and you may also make a donation to this maintenance of this site.



## Computer Humor



*'Bread crumbs? Didn't Hansel and Gretel have GPS on their phones?'*

**Park Place Computers**, City Centre, 16 East Main Street, Suite 180, Lower Level  
Marshalltown, IA 50158

Phone: 641-352-4424

Email: [info@parkplacecomputers.com](mailto:info@parkplacecomputers.com)

Website: [www.parkplacecomputers.com](http://www.parkplacecomputers.com)

**Need a computer or computer instruction?--contact [Park Place Computers](#)**