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**SHERIFF LOU VALLARIO**  
**GARFIELD COUNTY, COLORADO**

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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For Immediate Release

Date: February 3, 2015

Time: 11:15 AM

Title: IRS Phone Scam

**IMPORTANT:** Please direct any media requests to the contact above. Do not contact the Garfield County Emergency Communications Center or Patrol staff for media requests.

GARFIELD COUNTY, Colo. –

Garfield County has recently been targeted by a phone call scam relatively new to our area. Citizens are being called and told that they owe money to the IRS or US treasury. They are further told that if they do not make an immediate payment that they will be subject to arrest and/or additional financial penalties.

The caller ID may show either as unknown, a series of zeros or in some cases, through a procedure known as ghosting, may reflect an actual IRS call back number. Since calls to an IRS number generally require the caller to hold anywhere from 15 to 60 minutes, even if you call back to try to verify the information there will be a wait.

Most people who call back the number and find it to be an IRS number unwittingly will assume the call is legitimate and may be tempted to believe the scammer. The caller will usually ask for a credit or debit card number to settle the matter or instruct the citizen to send the money through a “wire” service or a cash card purchase found at many local stores to avoid further action.

Be advised that our government at any level will generally notify you by mail if you owe money and allow you the opportunity to make legitimate arrangements to pay any outstanding debts you may have. That paper trail protects you and them if there is a future need to re-visit an issue.

You should also be wary of anyone who calls asking for personal information, money or an immediate payment of any amount through personal accounts or non-traceable “cash” cards, cash transfers etc.

There are other active phone schemes in our area including promises to deliver product or services such as Satellite TV/Direct TV, outstanding warrants threatening arrest and others. The list goes on, but in each case the citizen is being requested to make an immediate payment or deposit through a credit or debit card or to transfer money through a local service to another address or location.

Protect yourself from this type of invasion and check on anyone asking for money or a payment who has called you. Get a return number and don't divulge any personal information or account numbers until you know who you are dealing with and that they are a legitimate company. If you are suspicious make a few calls or contact your local Law Enforcement Officers. Time and diligence on your part could save you from falling victim to these phone scams.

More information will be released as it becomes available.

*The mission of the Garfield County Sheriff's Office is to provide solutions for the people by utilizing and employing strong morals, good character, untarnished integrity, technical knowledge and fiscal responsibility through professional, ethical and equitable conduct.*

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