



For more information, contact:

Kim Schmanke

Desk 360-534-1602 | Cell 360-688-6102

Follow us on Twitter: @WASStateDOR

## **Beware: phishing scams targeting businesses**

**OLYMPIA** – Jan. 9, 2015 – Scammers are at it again. This time, they are targeting Washington citizens and businesses with fraudulent emails asking them to pay off tax liens owed to the state.

The email reads that the Department of Revenue has filed a lien in county probate courts or with the Secretary of State. The taxpayer is directed to make a cash-by-wire-transfer payment before Jan. 20. Neither the email nor fax number listed in the email for Revenue is legitimate.

Revenue’s director says taxpayers should never hesitate to confirm the accuracy of an unexpected message about unpaid taxes.

“Trust your instincts: if you are uncertain about a message from someone claiming to represent the Department, call us back at the numbers listed on our website,” said Carol K. Nelson, Revenue’s director. “That’s a legitimate way to protect yourself from scammers.”

When businesses have overdue taxes, Revenue will contact them to arrange payment. In developing these types of schemes, scam artists are trying to take advantage of the fear around unpaid taxes.

Every year Revenue hears from taxpayers about fraudulent messages supposedly left by agency employees. Each time the scammers become more sophisticated, even using phone numbers that are just one or two digits different than Revenue’s toll-free information line.

Call Revenue at 800-647-7706 or check their website to confirm the phone number matches: <http://dor.wa.gov/800>. Also consider contacting Revenue and making a report with the [Attorney General’s Office](#) and [Federal Trade Commission](#) consumer protection teams.

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### **About Revenue**

The Department of Revenue is Washington state’s primary tax administration agency, nationally recognized for innovation and service quality. Revenue collected more than \$19.6 billion in tax revenues in Fiscal Year 2014. These funds go to support public schools, social services, health care, corrections, public safety and natural resources conservation.

