

“Beware the tax rebate scam”

Literally thousands of taxpayers are being targeted by fraudsters with fake e-mails trying to trick them into handing over bank details. Small business owners and the self-employed are being sent messages stating they are owed a tax rebate and requesting either bank or credit card details so that money can be refunded. Alternatively, they are being asked to call a phone line to leave their details. Apparently, the line keeps ringing even though callers are being charged up to £6 per minute.

Said Phil Wood, managing director of chartered accountants and licensed insolvency practitioners, Barringtons, “This is a particularly sophisticated scam especially as these messages are being sent out to coincide with the 31st January self-assessment deadline.”

The messages include the HM Revenue & Customs logo and are being sent from addresses such as refundtax@hmrc.gov.co.uk and TaxRefund@hmrc.gov.uk.

“Taxpayers who fall for this scam risk theft from their bank accounts and having their financial details sold to organised criminal gangs. The problem is that this scam works as people appear only too willing to enter personal details on a myriad of websites without even thinking twice about it. The lesson here is never click on links in unsolicited e-mails,” added Phil.