

# JOPLIN

# POLICE

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Lane Roberts  
Chief of Police

**Date: February 2, 2015**

**Origin: Department PIO**

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

Joplin residents are urged to use extreme caution when conducting financial transactions that request you use a Green Dot card or Western Union to send money.

The use of these means to send money is almost always an indication of a fraud. The Joplin Police Department has taken several reports in recent weeks about people receiving calls from the IRS and requesting that they pay tax money owed with a Green Dot card. The IRS does not call about tax bills and will send information about your account via the U.S. Postal Service.

The same thing with people requesting you send money for loan application fees and Secret Shopper scams. The request to send money via these services is a major indicator of fraud.

If you have received a call or email from the IRS you can contact them to confirm that you may owe money.

If you have lost money via one of these scams you may contact the Joplin Police Department and file a report.

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## 10 ways to stop Identity Theft

- 1) **Guard your social security number.** Do NOT print your Social Security Number on your checks. After applying for a loan, credit card, rental or anything else that requires a credit report, request your Social Security number on the application be truncated or completely obliterated and your original document report be shredded before your eyes, or returned to you once a decision has been made.
- 2) **Monitor your credit report.**
- 3) **Buy a shredder and use it.** Identity thieves may use your garbage to obtain personal information. Shred all old bank and credit statements as well as “junk mail” credit offers, before trashing them.
- 4) **Remove your name from marketing lists.** The three credit-reporting bureaus –Equifax, Experian and TransUnion -- all maintain marketing lists that may contain your information. Contact these agencies to remove you name from the lists. You may also want to add your name to the Missouri “No Call” list to reduce telephone solicitations.
- 5) **Watch what you carry in your wallet.** Do not keep your Social Security card in your wallet or carry extra credit cards, or other important identity documents except when needed.
- 6) **Keep duplicate records.** Place the contents of your wallet on a photocopy machine. Copy both sides of your license and credit cards so you have all the account information, numbers, expiration dates and phone numbers if your wallet or purse gets stolen.
- 7) **Mail payments from a safe location.** Do not mail bill payments and checks from home. They can be stolen from your mailbox and washed clean in chemicals. Take them to the post office.
- 8) **Monitor your Social Security activity.** You may wish to order your Social Security Earnings and Benefits statement once a year to check for fraud.
- 9) **Monitor your credit card activity.** Carefully examine your credit-card statements for fraudulent charges before paying them. If you don’t need or use department store or bank issued credit cards, close the accounts.
- 10) **Know who you are talking to.** NEVER give your credit-card number or personal information over the phone unless you have initiated the call and trust that business.

### Credit Bureaus

<b>Equifax:</b>	<a href="http://www.equifax.com">www.equifax.com</a>	1-888-202-4025
<b>Experian:</b>	<a href="http://www.experian.com">www.experian.com</a>	1-888-397-3742
<b>TransUnion:</b>	<a href="http://www.transunion.com/index.jsp">www.transunion.com/index.jsp</a>	1-800-916-8800
<b>FTC</b>	<a href="http://www.ftc.gov">www.ftc.gov</a>	1-877-438-4338 (1-877-ID THEFT)
<b>Removal from pre-approved offers of credit:</b>		1-888-567-8688

Information will be relayed to all three credit bureaus.

(1-888-5OPTOUT)

## Social Security

**Social Security Earnings:** [www.ssa.gov/mystatement/](http://www.ssa.gov/mystatement/) 1-800-772-1213  
**Social Security Fraud:** [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov) 1-800-269-0271

## Unsolicited Phone Calls

**Missouri “NO CALL” list:** [www.ago.mo.gov/nocall](http://www.ago.mo.gov/nocall) 1-866-662-2551  
**National Do Not Call registry** [www.donotcall.gov](http://www.donotcall.gov)

## Junk Mail

### Direct Marketing Association’s Mail Preference Service (MPS)

DMA Mail Preference Service  
P.O. Box 643  
Carmel, NY 10512 [www.dmaconsumers.org](http://www.dmaconsumers.org) 1-212-790-1488

**ADVO, Inc., List Service Department** 1-888-241-6760  
P.O. Box 249  
Windson CT 06095

**Harte-Hanks** 1-800-422-4116  
2830 Orbiter St.  
Brea, CA 92821

**Valpak Coupons** [www.coxtarget.com/contact.html](http://www.coxtarget.com/contact.html) 1-800-237-6266  
8575 Largo Lakes Drive  
Largo FL 33773

**Donnelly Marketing Database Ops** 1-888-633-4402  
416 So. Bell  
Ames IA 50010

## Sweepstakes and Prizes

**Publishers Clearinghouse** 1-800-645-9242  
101 Channel Dr.  
Port Washington NY. 11050

**Readers Digest** 1-800-334-9599  
Readers Digest Road  
Pleasantville NY. 10570

## Other Helpful Numbers

**Better Business Bureau** 1-417-862-4222

