

SBA Fraud Warning

The U.S. Small Business Administration has issued a scam alert to small businesses warning them not to respond to letters falsely claiming to have been sent by the SBA asking for bank account information to qualify them for federal tax rebates.

The fraudulent letters were sent out with what appears to be an SBA letterhead to small businesses across the country, advising recipients that they may be eligible for a tax rebate under the Economic Stimulus Act, and that SBA is assessing their eligibility for such a rebate. The letter asks the small business to provide the name of its bank and account number.

These letters have not been sent by or authorized by the SBA, and all small businesses are strongly advised not to respond to them.

The scheme is similar in many ways to e-mail scams often referred to as “phishing” that seek personal data and financial account information that enables another party to access and individual’s bank accounts or to engage in identity theft.

Anyone who receives such a letter should report it to the OIG Fraud Line at (800) 767-0385, or by e-mail at OIGHotline@sba.gov.