

# IRS News Release

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## IRS Warns Consumers of Possible Scams Relating to Relief of Typhoon Victims

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WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service today issued a consumer alert about possible scams taking place in the wake of Typhoon Haiyan. On Nov. 8, 2013, Typhoon Haiyan – known as Yolanda in the Philippines – made landfall in the central Philippines, bringing strong winds and heavy rains that have resulted in flooding, landslides, and widespread damage.

Following major disasters, it is common for scam artists to impersonate charities to get money or private information from well-intentioned taxpayers. Such fraudulent schemes may involve contact by telephone, social media, email or in-person solicitations.

The IRS cautions people wishing to make disaster-related charitable donations to avoid scam artists by following these tips:

- To help disaster victims, donate to recognized charities.
- Be wary of charities with names that are similar to familiar or nationally known organizations. Some phony charities use names or websites that sound or look like those of respected, legitimate organizations. The IRS website at [IRS.gov](http://IRS.gov) has a search feature, [Exempt Organizations Select Check](#), through which people may find legitimate, qualified charities; donations to these charities may be tax-deductible. Legitimate charities may also be found on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) website at [fema.gov](http://fema.gov).
- Don't give out personal financial information — such as Social Security numbers or credit card and bank account numbers and passwords — to anyone who solicits a contribution from you. Scam artists may use this information to steal your identity and money.
- Don't give or send cash. For security and tax record purposes, contribute by check or credit card or another way that provides documentation of the gift.
- If you plan to make a contribution for which you would like to claim a deduction, see IRS [Publication 526, Charitable Contributions](#), to read about the kinds of organizations that can receive deductible contributions.

Bogus websites may solicit funds for disaster victims. Such fraudulent sites frequently mimic the sites of, or use names similar to, legitimate charities, or claim to be affiliated with legitimate charities in order to persuade members of the public to send money or provide personal financial information that can be used to steal identities or financial resources. Additionally, scammers often send e-mail that steers the recipient to bogus websites that appear to be affiliated with legitimate charitable causes.

Taxpayers suspecting disaster-related frauds should visit IRS.gov and search for the keywords "[Report Phishing](#)." More information about tax scams and schemes may be found at IRS.gov using the keywords "scams and schemes."