



US-CERT NOTIFICATION

On Saturday, November 27, 2005 taxpayers throughout the country began receiving emails purporting to be from the Internal Revenue Service. The emails showed a “from” address of tax-refunds@irs.gov and contained the following verbiage:

You are eligible to receive a tax refund for \$571.94.
To access the form for your tax return use the link below:

http://www.govbenefits.gov/govbenefits/externalLink.jhtml?url=h%74t%70:%2F%2F%77%77%77%2Eporterfam%2E%6F%72%67%2F2005%2F%3F_cmd=/cgibin/2005/trefund/id=96596,00 (copy and paste this link in your browser address bar)

12 days left to apply for your refund. You may not receive your refund as quickly as you expected. A refund can be delayed for a variety of reasons. For example, a name and Social Security number listed on the tax return may not match the IRS records. You may have failed to electronically sign the return or applied after the deadline.

This email has been sent by the Internal Revenue Service, a bureau of the Department of the Treasury.

The link directed the intended victims to an actual U.S. government web site (<http://www.govbenefits.gov>), however, once connected to that site they were automatically redirected to the actual PHISHING site, which was located at <http://www.porterfam.org>. The purpose of using the redirect was to further obfuscate the URL of the actual PHISHING site, which was concealed within the link using a technique known as “URL encoding”. A screen shot of the PHISHING site is attached.

On November 30, 2005 the website (www.porterfam.org) hosting the PHISHING web pages was taken offline.

A screen print of the PHISHING form is attached as well as the tips from US-CERT. Go to the link below for further information.

US-CERT provides the following information on our website for individuals to educate themselves on and how to protect against PHISHING and identity theft: <http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/ST04-014.html>