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COUNTY OFFICIALS WARN AGAINST PROPERTY TAX SCAM

Scammers Going to Taxpayer Homes to Collect Property Tax Payments

LOS ANGELES, CA - Los Angeles County Treasurer and Tax Collector Keith Knox and County Assessor Jeffrey Prang are alerting the public to a property tax scam under the guise of COVID-19 that has been reported to a District Office of the Assessor.

It's being reported that unknown people are attempting to fraudulently collect in-person property tax payments at taxpayers' homes because of COVID-19. The individuals may even have fake identification as well as the tax bill for the specific homeowner in question. These individuals allegedly are claiming that the homeowner must pay their property taxes in-person because the COVID-19 pandemic has closed County offices to the public.

A graphic designed to look like a warning sign. On the left is a red-bordered sign with a white background that says 'WARNING!' in white on a red background, and 'SCAM ALERT' in large red letters on a white background. To the right of the sign is a photograph of a residential street with a house and trees. Overlaid on the right side of the image is the text: 'Reports of SCAMMERS door-to-door knocking demanding property tax payments. DON'T PAY!' in bold black font. At the bottom, it lists payment methods: 'You may process tax payments via: 1. Online eCheck 2. Online Credit or Debit Card 3. Mail Payment 4. Telephone Payment' and 'Visit: TTC.LACOUNTY.GOV for more information'.

"Please note that the County of Los Angeles Treasurer and Tax Collector (TTC) does not conduct in-person

visits to collect property tax payments and that any attempts to collect in-person payments are fraudulent," said Keith Knox, Los Angeles County Treasurer and Tax Collector. "Should you be contacted at your home or hear about this in your neighborhood, do not make payment to the person requesting it and notify local law enforcement immediately. Be sure to provide a detailed description of the individual."

Assessor Prang agreed, saying that residents need to be aware of this scam and not to engage with anybody seeking an in-person property tax payment.

"It's important to be cautious with anybody making unsolicited offers," Assessor Prang said. "Appraisers sometimes will visit homes to appraise the property but our appraisers will never ask for tax payments. This current activity is a scam and it's important to report it to the authorities immediately."

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the TTC and Assessor offices are closed to the public and the TTC is not accepting in-person payments. The TTC accept payments online, by mail, or over the telephone. For details on available property tax payment options, visit ttc.lacounty.gov. For Assessor information go to assessor.lacounty.gov.

Assessor Prang was first elected in 2014 and re-elected in 2018. He runs the largest office of its kind in the nation, employing 1,400 people with an annual budget cresting near \$200 million. The 2020 assessment roll topped out near \$1.77 trillion and provides about \$17 billion in vital public services. For more information, please visit us online at Assessor.LACounty.gov, on Facebook at Facebook.com/LACAssessor, or on Twitter at @LACAssessor.

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eNewsletter of Los Angeles County Assessor Jeffrey Prang