

Downtown is  
Calling

Good  
Times  
Await



August 2024

# DB Bulletin

Riverside Downtown Business Improvement District

## The Museum of Riverside Celebrates 100 Years with a Special Exhibition



“While we continue to await the exciting future that will come when the main Museum reopens, we are pleased to offer a thoughtful exhibition that celebrates not only the Museum of Riverside’s first century but eagerly looks forward to the next century,” Museum Director Robyn G. Peterson said.


The Museum of Riverside announces the opening of its centennial exhibition, **Dear Riverside, a letter to our first love**. This landmark exhibition, 100 years in the making, is on view from July 25 to January 5, 2025, at the Center for Social Justice & Civil Liberties (CSJ&CL).

The Museum of Riverside was established on December 12, 1924 with a generous donation from local resident Mary Elizabeth Rumsey in memory of her late husband Cornelius Earle Rumsey. Through this initial collection, the Museum was founded as an expression of high regard for Riverside and its people, and belief in its cultural and historical significance.

Over the past century, the Museum has grown and evolved, steadfastly serving the community through exhibitions and programs, as well as the care of its diverse collections and historic sites.

Dear Riverside distills the richness in the Museum’s collection while embracing a future of inclusivity and transparency in professional practices. It offers a mix of memories, self-reflection, and hope. The exhibition will feature items dating to the Museum’s founding alongside the newest additions, which were commissioned specifically for this exhibition.

Visitors will find significant pieces from history to nature, textiles to botanical specimens, paintings to documents -- all collected over the last century from you, our community. The “love letter” that this exhibition embodies will examine honestly the ups and downs of a century of changing museum practices, and in return simply ask, “How can the Museum do better?”

The exhibition is supported by the City of Riverside, Dwight Tate and Kathy Wright, and the Riverside Museum Associates. 

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There is no luncheon in August.

Join us for the RDP luncheon at Noon on

Tuesday, September 24, 2024

at the Riverside Game Lab

featuring Andrea De Leon from KRCB and

Amy Metcalf from UCR Arts

Call the RDP office at 951-781-7335

for reservations.



## Festival Mi Vida Hermosa 2024

Mi Vida Hermosa is a music and food festival presented by Foodie Events, and Courageous Heart, an Organization that supports foster children, youth and supports improving communities.

The event will be held on Saturday, August 17th in White Park from Noon to 8 pm. There will be live entertainment by some of the best Mexican and Latino bands, plus a show by the original Lucha Libre. There

will be a beer and margarita garden, a taco & salsa competition, food and merchandise vendors, carnival games, plus 500 backpacks and 30 bikes to be given away. All proceeds benefit foster youth and children. For more info call 909-235-2314, or visit <https://foodieworldvibes.com/event/latin-music-and-food-fest>. Tickets are \$15 with children under 10 free.

# Supervisor's Message – Kevin's Corner

*Contributed by Supervisor Kevin Jeffries*



**Endless Litigation.** For those of you who have worked in big government or a big business you likely already know that litigation (aka lawsuits) is a routine part of being in business. We are a society that rushes to court, particularly if a target is perceived to have “deep pockets”. Now before you write me a nasty gram, I am neither a defender of big business nor big government. Nor would I deny someone the right to be compensated for actual harm and injury. But in the case of your Riverside

County government – the legal payout numbers are staggering and frustrating.

Over a ten (10) year period (7/1/14 to 6/10/24), the total of all jury and settlement payouts (excluding legal fees) exceeded \$241 million! It's an amount that makes your blood boil. Who were the top departments to be litigated over the 10 year period? Sheriff at \$99,633,565, Social Services \$57,466,570, Hospital/Health System \$38,523,859, and the Transportation Agency \$20,147,978. The top two peak payout years were 2014/15 (\$41mil) and 2018/19 (\$36mil). The good news for taxpayers is that with internal reforms and accountability

pushed by the Board - the litigation awards and settlements have generally been decreasing each year (\$7 mil 2021/22 and \$4.5mil 2022/23). If this trend holds, the taxpayers of this county will be the winners, as your hard earned tax dollars can instead be spent providing actual services instead of attorneys.

**Holy Freeway!** Most of our local state owned freeways (91, 60, 15, & 215) simply serve as parking lots during the heavy commuter hours. Those extended drives serve as a great time to get your knitting and/or homework done (just kidding). Our office has been receiving a significant number of calls and emails about one freeway in particular that is now well known for its extensive potholes and deteriorating condition – that being the 215 between Perris and Riverside. The state of this state-owned freeway is embarrassingly bad. And since Caltrans is no longer in the business of building or expanding freeways, the least they could do is better maintain what they have! If you are so inclined, you can email Caltrans with a Customer Service Request (CSR) for any number of concerns, including obstacles on the roadway, potholes, landscape issues, signage, graffiti, homeless encampments, etc. CSRs can be submitted at: <https://csr.dot.ca.gov/> They say a major refresh is coming soon, but the multi-year timeline we have seen is simply not good enough.

# Mayor's Message - Riverside Rolls Out Summer Fun with Park Upgrades and Fresh Activities

*Contributed by Mayor Patricia Lock Dawson*



Summer has arrived and Riverside's parks are busy with activity! In July we celebrated Parks and Recreation Month along with the National Recreation and Parks Association. For nearly 40 years, we have celebrated Parks and Recreation Month in July to promote building strong, vibrant and resilient communities through the power of parks and recreation.

In a dedicated effort to enhance our city's outdoor spaces, the City Council has green lit several park improvements over the last few weeks. Most notable being the May 21st approval of the Fairmount Park Lake Dredging Project. Fairmount Park has been Riverside's signature park since it was established in 1898! The approved project will remove nearly 26,000 cubic yards of sediment that has accumulated in Fairmount Lake. Why is there so much sediment? Stormwater passes through Fairmount Park on the way to the Santa Ana River, causing sediment and silt to settle in the lake bottom. This dredging project will significantly increase the lake's depth and water quality.

Following the dredging project, we can look forward to the return of pedal boats in the late summer! A beloved activity that allows families to enjoy our city's beautiful lakes. The Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department will continue to seek funding from the Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District to reduce the silt and allow us to conduct routine maintenance to ensure that pedal boats stay for good!

While we eagerly await the return of pedal boats, Fairmount Park continues to offer a wealth of attractions. Visitors can explore playgrounds, a splash pad, shaded picnic spots, a golf course, the Stewart Boathouse, a fishing pier, a band shell, lawn bowling, the historic Izaak Walton clubhouse and acres of open space!

Further updates are coming to not only Fairmount Park, but several parks across the city! Recent City Council approvals on June 18th included funding for rubber safety surfacing replacement at seven park sites, enhancing the safety of playgrounds citywide. The City Council was asked to approve the replacement and upgrades of nine playgrounds citywide in July.

Beyond Fairmount Park, Riverside offers a diverse range of recreational opportunities this summer. One highlight was the “Concerts in the Park” series, held every Wednesday night in June and July at the band shell. It was a perfect opportunity for friends and families to gather and enjoy music in Riverside's cherished park. For those who liked to enjoy movies under the stars, the “Movies in the Park” series offered family-friendly screenings every Friday during the summer at different parks across the city, showcasing the diverse offerings of Riverside's park system.

Residents can cool off from the summer heat at any of our seven recreational pools or six splash pads located throughout the city. Exciting news includes the recent opening of Andulka Park's splash pad! Additionally, through Operation Splash, a collaboration with Kaiser Permanente, residents can access free swim lessons, passes, and junior lifeguard scholarships. If you are not yet comfortable in the

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water, the City of Riverside Aquatics program offers swim lesson programs designed for all ages and skill levels, ensuring everyone can safely enjoy the water. We can also look forward to the installation of new pool heaters at Hunt, Villegas and Reid parks, approved by City Council on May 21st. Next year we will have five heated pools for the community and seniors to enjoy year-round!

Over the last few weeks council has also approved several contracts related to parks including janitorial services, landscape maintenance, pool maintenance, parking lot

repairs, and tree maintenance services. As city leaders, we are committed to maintaining and improving our parks because we believe that Parks Make Life Better!

I encourage you to discover everything Riverside has to offer this summer. Whether you're drawn to the history of Fairmount Park or the vibrant activities across the city, there's something for everyone to enjoy. Join us in celebrating the summer season and making lasting memories in our beautiful city. To read more about the activities happening all summer long, visit the Summer 2024 Activity Guide!



# COUNCIL CORNER

## Ward One Council Update

Contributed by Councilmember Philip Falcone

### Crossing the 100-Day Line

July 18, 2024 marked one hundred days in office as the councilmember for Riverside's first ward. During my April 9, 2024 swearing-in ceremony I pledged to hit the ground running on day one as a tireless, full-time councilmember and that's exactly what I have done.

In these first hundred days, my team and I have been laser-focused on doing the work we were elected to do—focus on the critical responsibilities of local government. To provide details on how these one hundred days have positively impacted your quality of life in Riverside, here is a snapshot of what has occurred in this time.

### Infrastructure Investments: Roads, Roads, Roads

It is no secret that I am an infrastructure and facilities councilmember—our roads, parks, libraries, community centers are our communal assets, and the City Council and City of Riverside team are the stewards of these assets. To that end, in these few months in office we have repaved Sedgwick Ave, Glenwood Dr, currently repaving Virginia Pl, Tower Rd, Palm Ave, and Market St with over two dozen other Ward 1 streets greenlit for repaving since April 9, 2024. During the race for this seat, I pledged to allocate more dollars for road repaving than we have before and that is exactly what has occurred. An extra \$5 million was allocated for road repaving in the recently adopted 2024/2025 budget bringing this year's road repaving investment to a historic \$27 million.

### Park Improvements: Our Front Yards

Our fifty-five city parks are our front yards. Ward 1 has a dozen parks—more than any other ward—and I have spent hours surveying each of these twelve parks with our Parks director. Since April 9, 2024, the Bordwell Park parking lot has been repaved, new rubberized flooring installed at

Reid Park playground and agreements executed for repaving Reid Park parking lot, swimming pool heater at Reid Park, new wayfinding signage at Fairmount Park along with the highly-anticipated Fairmount Lake dredging project to return pedal boats to the lake, the construction of a gymnasium at Bordwell Park, and a \$25 million dollar renovation for the Cesar Chavez Center at Bobby Bonds Park. This is just an abbreviated list as there are many more green-lit park improvement projects happening in Ward 1.



### Public Safety: Hearing from our First Responders

Public safety has also been top of mind. In these first one hundred days, I have met with firefighters at all fourteen of our fire stations, asking them how the City Council can help make a safer Riverside. Similarly, I spent time with Riverside Police Department officers and police support staff at all four police stations. Meeting face to face with over one hundred public safety professionals has provided me with valuable insight on how they serve Riverside—and what we need to do to improve. The recent Supreme Court decision on the Grants Pass, OR case re-affirms the City's ability to enforce local ordinances designed to deter illegal activity by homeless people—something that occupies 80% of our public safety professionals' time.

It is my hope that this gives you a taste of the happenings in Ward 1—proving to you the level of dedication and sense of urgency I take to this role each day.

As always, much remains to do, so let's get to it.

*I am on Instagram and Facebook under "Councilmember Philip Falcone."*



## Ward Two Council Update

Contributed by Councilwoman Clarissa Cervantes



### Summer is in full swing and the next school year is right around the corner! 50th Anniversary Congratulations:

My office was able to attend TWO 50th Anniversary ribbon cuttings in June for businesses located in Ward 2! I extend a heartfelt congratulations to both Accuturn Corporation & Credit.org on 50 years of success in the City! We are grateful that you have chosen Riverside

as your home and appreciate the impact you make in our community.

**Annual Backpack Giveaway:** The Lincoln Park Neighborhood Group, the Office of Ward 2, and the City's Parks and Recreation Department will be hosting a free backpack giveaway on Friday, August 9th at 3 pm. Please join us at the Lincoln Park Community Room located at 4261 Park Avenue to get your kiddos ready for the upcoming school year! No registration is required for this event.

A special shout-out to Cellar Door Bookstore for donating free books to the students and families! This is the 2nd year they have partnered with us and distributed hundreds of

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books to the Eastside neighborhood. Be sure to visit them this summer and #ShopSmall!

### Ward 2 Development Updates

**Cesar Chavez Community Center:** The City Council last month approved the architectural design services request for proposals (RFP) for the historic Cesar Chavez Community Center renovation project. This is part of the initial phase before the project undergoes renovations with the \$25 million secured from the State by Assemblymember's Jose Medina (Ret.) and Sabrina Cervantes. I also want to acknowledge Senator Richard Roth for his support and advocacy of the Riverside Arts Academy.

Now, we need your input! The City along with my office and Councilmember Falcone will be hosting three community public meetings to gather input from residents and the general public. The first meeting is on Tuesday, August 13th at 6:30 pm in the Cesar Chavez Community Room.

If you are interested in learning more about any of the projects or events in Ward 2 please call my office at 951-826-5419 or email me at [ccervantes@riversideca.gov](mailto:ccervantes@riversideca.gov).

***Hoping that you are making sweet summer memories with your loved ones!***

Sincerely, Clarissa Cervantes



## Riverside Artswalk Artist Spotlight: Rosy Cortez

*Contributed by Rachael Dzikonski, Executive Director – Riverside Arts Council*



Riverside Artswalk is back after a short pause taken in July due to the holiday, and the arts community is ready! The galleries are hosting new artists and exhibitions and over 100 eager artists are just waiting to get back on Main Street to showcase their original artworks. The Riverside Arts Council is also launching a new program, the Artswalk Gallery tours this month where attendees can purchase a ticket for a guided tour through all of the participating museums and galleries during Riverside Artswalk. This month don't forget

to check out the newest mural in Downtown Riverside created by this month's artist spotlight, Rosy Cortez.

Rosy Cortez is a Chicana oil painter & muralist based in Riverside, CA. She studied photography and fine art at Moreno Valley College and Riverside Community College, then received a Bachelor of Fine Arts from California State University of Long Beach with a concentration in Figurative Painting. Rosy worked as a commercial product photographer before pursuing her dream of being a full-time artist. Since then, Rosy led various community based mural projects in Moreno Valley and most recently was a recipient of the Creative Corps

Inland SoCal grant funded by the California Arts Council to create a collaborative Native mural in downtown Riverside.

The mural idea began in 2021 when Serrano/Cahuilla Native Rosy Aranda had approached the Eastside Arthouse to inquire about creating a Native mural in Riverside. Unfortunately, there was no funding resources at the time. Two years later, Rosy Cortez reached out to Rosy Aranda to collaborate on the dream mural through the Creative Corps Inland SoCal opportunity. Since their approval in June 2023, Rosy Aranda, later joined by Blossom Maciel, have been serving as liaisons to the Native Community to inform and guide the project concept and development so that it could best represent and reflect local Native communities. The mural is located across from the Downtown Historic Courthouse and also includes a hide and seek game which you can find more information about on the murals website.

Rosy has many goals and milestones that she would like to achieve along her artistic path such as exhibiting in certain galleries or painting a giant skyscraper, but her ultimate goal is to stay passionate about this work and be able to sustain her artistic practice for the rest of her life.

For more information about Rosy and her artwork, visit [@paintedrosy](https://www.instagram.com/paintedrosy) on IG or [paintedrosy.com](https://paintedrosy.com) and her mural at [sh mural.wixsite.com/still-here-mural](https://sh mural.wixsite.com/still-here-mural). For more information on Riverside Artswalk visit [www.riversideartswalk.com](https://www.riversideartswalk.com) or [@riversideartswalk](https://www.instagram.com/riversideartswalk) on IG



## BUSINESS BUZZ

### Google for Business: – A Small Business Guide. by Sammi Caramela

From calendars and email to business profiles and maps, Google helps you run your business efficiently and establish an online presence. Google for Small Business is the umbrella portal that explains how to use its suite of tools to establish and enhance your online presence.

Google has partnered with thousands of cities and local organizations to help businesses build their websites, stay on top of Google search results and be seen by customers. Here's how Google's solutions can help your business and how to get started.

#### Google Business Profile

If you're a small business owner, a potential customer's first exposure to your company is likely through a Google search.

Google Business Profile, formerly known as Google My Business, gives them something to find.

#### What is Google Business Profile?

Google Business Profile is a business tool that helps companies establish themselves as an entity in the Google universe. A Google Business Profile allows you to appear in search and map results when someone searches for your business type locally. It also allows customers to leave Google reviews of your business, which goes a long way toward building your company's credibility and generating leads.

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"[It] is a great starting point for a small business as it's simple to set up and free too," explained Ryan Scollon, a pay-per-click consultant. "It allows you to [appear] in the local/map results on a Google search results page when people are looking for a local service or business. It also allows you to show business opening hours, contact details and even directions to your place of work should people need to visit you."

You'll need to create or claim your Google Business Profile to take advantage of this service.

### **Benefits of Google Business Profile**

In the past, a Google Business Profile gave businesses a competitive advantage. Today, not having one gives you a marked disadvantage. Here are some of the benefits of establishing your Google Business Profile:

- **Enhancing customer communication:** You can tell potential customers about what you do, where you're located, when you're open, how others feel about you and anything else you want to share. You can also keep contacts informed by sharing status updates, photos, videos and links.
- **Fostering repeat business and loyalty:** You can build a following and keep customers coming back with news updates, event announcements, special offers, loyalty program enhancements and discounts.
- **Improving your reputation:** You can show your high level of customer care by viewing and responding to online reviews and answering customer questions.

When the coronavirus hit, Google expanded its business profile section so companies could post pandemic-related changes, such as different hours of operation and service changes like curbside pickup or takeout only for restaurants. This experience demonstrated how useful a Google Business Profile can be when you need to communicate with customers.

Prepare your business for the holiday shopping season by posting your holiday hours, special events, new product presales, discounts and more on your Google Business Profile.

### **Google Maps and search**

A Google business listing will allow others to find your company on Google Maps. You'll also rank higher in Google search results, making it easier for customers to find directions, hours and contact information for your business, whether they're searching on their computers or mobile devices.

### **Google posts**

You can share content directly on Google via your Google Business Profile by following these steps:

1. Search for your company's name on Google and go to your business profile.
2. Select Add update.
3. Select the type of post you want to make and complete the dialog box prompts.
4. Select an option to preview or publish your post.

Anyone searching for you or your business will have access to your posts. You can share pictures, videos, GIFs and event announcements. Setup is quick and simple.

### **Google Local Services Ads**

Google Local Services Ads are local ads that appear when people in your area search for the services you offer. Unlike Google Ads, you only pay for Google Local Services Ads when a customer calls or messages your business directly through the ad, making it an excellent tool for lead generation.

Service-based businesses can get a Google Guaranteed badge by passing a series of screening and verification steps. The badge shows customers that Google has verified your business and backs your services. Professionals, such as lawyers and consultants, can get a Google Screened badge, showing that Google has verified their background and vouches for their expertise.

To begin using this service, tell Google how many leads you would like to get per week and set up your ad budget. These simple ads include the company's name, the average number of stars from Google reviews and a few other words. Google will display your ad in accordance with the budget at the top of its search results, along with two or three competing companies.

Customers can reach you by selecting the ad and sending a direct message or by calling you. When your business receives phone calls through these ads, it's crucial to have a live human answering, not a voicemail. If a person doesn't answer calls, Google will reduce the number of times your ad appears. Having many good Google reviews also helps with your ad exposure.

Google Local Services Ads are a significant lead source for many small businesses.

### **Google Analytics**

Google Analytics is a powerful, free tool that helps you measure traffic and track website visitor behavior to determine what is — and isn't — helping your website meet its goals. It shows various visitor metrics, such as audience engagement, mobile and social media traffic and bounce rates (the rate at which visitors stay on your website or move among pages). It also includes referral traffic information (where your traffic is coming from) to help you gauge whether your marketing campaigns are working and how they could improve. This is all valuable information about your target audience.

"Google offers free certifications for business owners interested in leveraging the gold mine of data that comes from using this tool," noted Jeanette Guardiola-Woods, design strategist and CEO of Sketch and Form.

Once you learn how to use Google Analytics, you can discover your customers' geographical locations, other sites they've visited, what kind of devices they use, whether they completed a call to action on your site and which pages of the site they are abandoning the most.

"The real value in this data is that it allows you to target your customer more specifically, fix areas of your site that need to be optimized and track successful events," Guardiola-Woods explained.

You can set up custom alerts within Google Analytics to notify you of fluctuations in your sales analytics data, including website traffic, interactions and conversions.

### **Google Workspace**

You don't need expensive productivity solutions to support your operations. Google Workspace (formerly G Suite) is an affordable alternative with a streamlined suite of web-based office applications and cloud storage and collaboration services. It consists of Gmail, Calendar and Drive, which includes the office apps Docs, Sheets and Slides. These platforms offer desktop and mobile access, offline support and Google-backed security.

Google Workspace starts at \$6 per user, per month. The basic plan includes 30GB of storage for each user. The higher plans,

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for \$12 or \$18 per month, include 2TB and 5TB of storage, respectively. There is also an enterprise plan with an option for more storage. For that plan, you must contact the Google sales team for specific pricing information.

Here's some more information about Google Workspace's applications:

- **Gmail:** If you love Gmail's business features, you'll appreciate that Google Workspace lets you access your business email on the Gmail platform but without the @gmail.com extension. You can use a custom email address with your business's domain, such as you@yourcompany.com. This version of Gmail comes with 2TB of storage per user, Google's search and security features and integration with Calendar.
- **Google Calendar:** As its name implies, Google Calendar lets you manage your schedule and organize events. Features include meeting reminders and calendar sharing so you can see when team members are busy or free. Additionally, you can attach documents to events and embed event calendars on your company website, allowing clients to set up appointments instantly.
- **Google Drive:** This cloud storage and collaboration platform helps you and your team store, share and edit files in real time over the web. Drive includes full-featured productivity apps, including Docs (word processor), Sheets (spreadsheet editor) and Slides (presentation software). These services are available as stand-alone mobile apps from the Google Play Store and Apple's App Store for on-the-go access. These apps are excellent communication and collaboration tools for employees who work from different locations.

### **Google Gemini for Workspace**

Artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming businesses and Google isn't about to be left behind. Google Gemini is a multimodal AI technology designed to assist with various tasks

and make your business run smoother and more efficiently. As an AI assistant, Google Gemini integrates seamlessly with all the applications in Google Workspace.

There are two versions of Google Gemini, Gemini Business and Gemini Enterprise, to suit your different business requirements:

- **Gemini Business:** Gemini Business costs \$20 per user, per month, and gives you access to some of Gemini's most advanced models. With these capabilities, you can generate and summarize content in Docs, create images in Google Slides, make detailed tables in Google Sheets and enhance the lighting and video quality of your Google Meet calls.
- **Gemini Enterprise:** Gemini Enterprise costs \$30 per user, per month, and includes all the features of the Business plan plus additional benefits. This version offers advanced translation features that generate captions in more than a dozen languages, making it easier to communicate with international clients and team members. Furthermore, it provides full access to everything Gemini offers, including its most sophisticated models and functionalities.

### **Leveraging Google's suite of tools**

Google offers a comprehensive suite of tools designed to help small businesses succeed, from setting up a professional online presence to managing day-to-day operations. While you might already use Google for searching and email, using some of its platforms dedicated to supporting businesses can enhance your efficiency greatly. These applications allow you to take advantage of advanced technology to increase your brand's visibility, streamline your operations and improve your team's productivity.

Source: <https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/6344-google-business-guide.html>



## **SECURITY CORNER**

### **Tech Support Scams**

#### **Here's how the scam works**

You receive a call from someone who says they're a computer technician from a well-known tech company, your caller ID says it's tech support and/or there's a pop-up message on your computer from tech support. They may ask you to open some files or run a scan on your computer, then they tell you the scan results indicates there's an issue - but there isn't really one.

Scammers may then

- Ask you to give them remote access to your device, allowing the hackers to have access to all your stored information,
- Try to enroll you in a worthless computer warranty or maintenance policy,
- Install malware on your computer that gives them access to your usernames and passwords,
- Ask for your credit card information so they can bill for phony services or try to sell you monthly repair services, or

- Direct you to websites and ask for your bank account or credit card information.

#### **How to avoid similar scams**

- If a caller says your computer has a problem, HANG UP. A tech support call you didn't initiate is a scam - even if the number looks legitimate.
- If you receive a pop-up message to call tech support, IGNORE IT. Some pop-up messages about computer issues are legitimate, but never click on a link that appears in a pop-up message.
- If you're worried about a virus or other threat, contact your security software company directly or consult a trusted security professional. Never give someone your password or remote access to your computer who contacts you directly.

#### **What to do if you are scammed**

- If you shared your password with a scammer, change it on every account that uses it.

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- Download or update legitimate security software to get rid of malware. Scan your computer and delete anything the software says is a problem.
- If you need help with an affected computer connected to a network, consult a trusted security professional and have them check the entire network for intrusions.
- If you bought bogus services, ask your credit card company to reverse the charges. Make sure to check your statement for any charges you didn't approve.

*Thanks to Provident Bank for the information on Tech Support Scams.*

## **IRS Warns Tax Pros of Evolving Phishing and Cloud-based Schemes**

The IRS and its Security Summit partners have issued a warning to tax professionals about new phishing scams and cloud-based schemes aimed at stealing sensitive taxpayer information. These threats have evolved and now target tax professionals year-round.

"We continue to see a barrage of email and related attacks designed to trick tax professionals and gain access to their sensitive information," said IRS Commissioner Danny Werfel. "These attempts can be elaborate, multi-layered efforts that look convincing and can easily fool people. Tax professionals need to be wary and educate their employees to use extra caution to protect their clients and their businesses."

The Security Summit, which includes tax professionals, industry partners, state tax agencies, and the IRS, has been working since 2015 to safeguard the tax system against identity theft and fraud. This summer, the Nationwide Tax Forum will focus on these security tips, with events in five cities across the U.S. The forums are three-day continuing education events for tax professionals, starting July 30 in Orlando and continuing through September 10 in San Diego.

Common threats tax professionals face include phishing and related scams. These scams trick recipients into disclosing personal information such as passwords, bank account numbers, credit card numbers, or Social Security numbers. Tax professionals and taxpayers should be aware of different phishing terms and what these scams might look like:

**Phishing/Smishing:** These emails or text messages attempt to trick the recipient into clicking a suspicious link, filling out information, or downloading a malware file. Often, these attempts are sent to multiple email addresses at a business or agency to increase the chances of success.

**Spear Phishing:** This specific type of scam targets individuals rather than large groups, delivering a realistic email known as a "lure." These scams are trickier to identify because they single out individuals, making the email seem more legitimate.

**Clone Phishing:** This newer type of scam clones a real email message and resends it to the original recipient, pretending to be the original sender. The new message includes an attachment with malware or a link designed to steal information.

**Whaling:** Similar to spear phishing, whaling targets leaders or executives with access to secure large amounts of information. These attacks can also target payroll offices, human resources personnel, and financial offices.

Security Summit partners have observed tax professionals being particularly vulnerable to emails posing as potential clients. In the "new client" scam, criminals use this technique to trick practitioners into opening email links or attachments that infect computer systems with malware.

Regardless of the type of phishing attempt, tax professionals can protect themselves by being aware of these scams and looking for warning signs, such as:

- Unexpected emails or texts from a known or trusted source, such as a colleague, bank, credit card company, cloud storage provider, tax software provider, or government agency.
- Duplicate emails from a known source that contain new attachments or hyperlinks.
- Messages with an urgent tone, urging the receiver to open a link or attachment.
- Email addresses, numbers, or links that are slightly misspelled or have different domain names or URLs.

"There are major red flags that can be easily overlooked, so tax professionals and taxpayers should be extra careful and look closely when they receive an email from an official-looking source," Werfel said.

Tax professionals using cloud-based systems should use multi-factor authentication to safeguard data. The Federal Trade Commission now requires practitioners to secure sensitive client information using multi-factor authentication, which provides an additional layer of security.

The IRS urges tax professionals who fall victim to these schemes or identity theft to quickly contact their IRS stakeholder liaison and report the incident to the appropriate state tax agency. This can help prevent these attacks from affecting others in the tax community.

Tax professionals should also understand the Federal Trade Commission's data breach response requirements and report incidents affecting 500 or more people within 30 days. To assist with these requirements, the Security Summit has prepared a sample Written Information Security Plan.

For more information, tax professionals should review IRS Publication 4557, Safeguarding Taxpayer Data, and other resources like the Small Business Information Security: The Fundamentals guide by the National Institute of Standards and Technology. The IRS also encourages tax professionals to stay updated through subscriptions to e-News for tax professionals and social media sites.

Source: <https://smallbiztrends.com/irs-warns-tax-pros-of-evolving-phishing-and-cloud-based-schemes/> 

## **RDP Welcomes New Businesses to Downtown**

Brother Hair Salon

Downtown Sushi

El King Smoke Shop

Hair by Angelica

Matthew Perry (MPEATZ) (Food)

Miley Y Paola (Antiques)

TLC Behavioral Services, LLC (Health Care)

Tonsorial Artistry (Hair, Nail, Skin)



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[www.RiversideDowntown.org](http://www.RiversideDowntown.org)



**RDP Website**

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Janice Penner

*Office Manager / Bookkeeper*  
Shirley Schmeltz

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