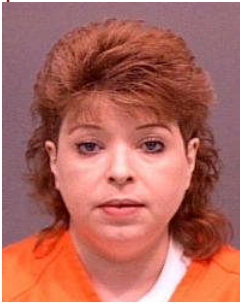


Fake CPA Pleads Guilty to Tax Fraud



A woman who posed as a tax accountant and CPA has pleaded guilty to six counts of tax fraud after she prepared returns for police and firefighters.

Denise Smith, 51, falsely claimed to be a CPA, according to prosecutors. She was accused of inflating deductions to get larger refunds for her clients, but many of them were later audited by the Internal Revenue Service and forced to pay penalties and interest. She ran the tax prep business from her home, according to the Associated Press.

A Jefferson County, Colo., jury indicted Smith last March, according to the *Denver Post*. She remains free on \$50,000 bail, but is scheduled for sentencing on April 9. She faces a prison term of up to 27 years.