

IRS News Release

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IRS Web Site, *Where's My Refund* See Increased Use

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WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service released statistics today showing that taxpayers' use of IRS.gov, which includes features such as *Where's My Refund* is increasing. Use of the IRS website has increased 9 percent over this time last year to 83.3 million visits.

Where's My Refund is the IRS Internet-based service taxpayers can use to check on the status of their federal income tax refunds. Nearly 21 million requests have been received on *Where's My Refund* this year, representing a growth of more than 3.9 million users compared to the same period last year.

"*Where's My Refund* is easy to use," said IRS Commissioner Mark W. Everson. "It is the fastest way to check on a refund. Taxpayers who file Form 1040EZ-T can also take advantage of *Where's My Refund* to find out about the telephone excise tax refund."

Taxpayers can check their refund status online anytime from anywhere. It is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, worldwide, only by visiting IRS.gov. Taxpayers can securely access their personal refund information by entering their Social Security number, filing status and the exact amount of their refund. These shared secrets, known only to the taxpayer and IRS, verify the person is authorized to access the account.

Taxpayers can check on the status of their federal income tax refunds seven days after they e-filed their return. If they file a paper return, they can check four to six weeks after mailing their return.

For the first time this year, taxpayers who chose direct deposit can split their refunds among as many as three accounts held by up to three different U.S. financial institutions. Split refunds offer taxpayers the opportunity to manage their money by sending part of their refund to one account for immediate needs and another part to a savings or investment account. The average refund at this point, which typically declines between now and the end of the filing season, is more than \$2,800.

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Where's My Refund will include a message confirming the refund was split and the expected deposit date. It will not specify the amount of individual deposits or the accounts to which the deposits were made.

Taxpayers can use *Where's My Refund* to verify when their refunds are scheduled for direct deposits or mailing, initiate a trace on lost or missing refund checks, and/or notify IRS of address changes in case of undeliverable refund checks.

The IRS reminds taxpayers they can avoid undelivered refund checks by having their refund checks deposited into a personal checking or savings account. Direct deposit also guards against theft and lost refund checks. Direct deposit is available for both paper and electronically filed returns.

Compared to this time last year, there is a 5.6 percent increase in the number of taxpayers who have chosen direct deposit for their refund. So far, refunds total about \$110 billion, a 9 percent increase over last year.

The IRS also reports a substantial increase in the number of taxpayers who are preparing their returns and filing online.

The table below shows an 8 percent increase in self-prepared online filing over the same period last year. Tax professional e-file also has increased by close to 4 percent over last year. Overall, e-filed returns are up nearly 5 percent, with about 45.5 million taxpayers e-filing their return.

In addition, this year's filings show about three in 10 tax returns are not requesting the one-time telephone tax refund. The standard amount ranges from \$30 to \$60 and is based on the number of exemptions a taxpayer is eligible to claim on their return. Although some of these taxpayers may not be eligible, others may qualify and not know it. The IRS urges taxpayers to check their eligibility for this special refund by visiting the Telephone Excise Tax Refund section on IRS.gov. Taxpayers who are not required to file a return can request the Telephone Excise Tax Refund by filing the 1040-EZT.

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2007 FILING SEASON STATISTICS

Cumulative through the weeks ending 3/10/06 and 3/9/07

Individual Income Tax Returns	2006	2007	% Change
Total Receipts	60,657,000	61,123,000	0.8%
Total Processed	56,028,000	56,974,000	1.7%
E-filing Receipts:			
TOTAL	43,356,000	45,498,000	4.9%
Tax Professionals	31,010,000	32,156,000	3.7%
Self-prepared	12,346,000	13,342,000	8.1%
Web Usage:			
Visits to IRS.gov	76,449,000	83,365,000	9.0%
Total Refunds:			
Number	50,656,000	50,515,000	-0.3%
Amount	\$122.752 Billion	\$128.736 Billion	4.9%
Average refund	\$2,423	\$2,548	5.2%
Direct Deposit Refunds:			
Number	37,031,000	39,088,000	5.6%
Amount	\$101.009 Billion	\$110.090 Billion	9.0%
Average refund	\$2,728	\$2,816	3.3%