

IRS News Release

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Electronically Filed Returns Up More Than 5 Percent

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WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service announced today that taxpayers are continuing to electronically file their tax returns at a record pace, up more than 5 percent from the same period last year.

“Taxpayers are filing electronically at a record pace this year,” said IRS Commissioner Mark W. Everson. “We encourage people to consider e-file and Free File as the tax deadline approaches. E-file reduces taxpayer errors and gets refunds back quickly.”

According to the new filing season statistics for the week ending March 16, 2007, one of the biggest areas of growth is in returns filed electronically from home. Self-prepared e-filed returns have grown more than 8 percent from last year. E-filed returns from tax professionals have climbed more than 4 percent.

So far this tax filing season, 73 percent of all returns have been e-filed, compared to 70 percent for the same period last year. As of last Friday, 29 percent of e-filed returns were filed by people using their home computers, up from 28 percent of e-filed returns for the same period last year.

Also, more people than ever before are opting to have their refunds directly deposited. So far this year, the IRS has directly deposited more than 42 million refunds, or 76 percent of all refunds issued this tax filing season, up from 71 percent of the total for the same period last year.

People are visiting the IRS Web site at IRS.gov in record numbers. The IRS has recorded more than 90 million unique visits to IRS.gov this year, up from about 83 million for the same period last year, an increase of 9.0 percent.

One of the most popular features of IRS.gov is "Where's My Refund?" As the name implies, taxpayers can check on the status of their tax refunds using this tool. Already this year, almost 24 million people have accessed this popular system, an increase of 23 percent over the same period last year.

Meanwhile, this year's filings still show that about three in 10 tax returns are not requesting the one-time telephone tax refund. 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.

The government stopped collecting the long-distance excise tax last August after several federal court decisions held that the tax does not apply to long-distance service as it is billed today. Federal officials also authorized a one-time refund of the 3 percent federal excise tax collected on service billed during the previous 41 months, stretching from the beginning of March 2003 to the end of July 2006. The tax continues to apply to local-only phone service.

Of those requesting the telephone tax refund, 99 percent are choosing the standard amount, and the rest are basing their request on the actual amount of tax paid. The standard amount ranges from \$30 to \$60 and is based on the number of exemptions taxpayers are eligible to claim on their return. Alternatively, taxpayers can request a refund based on the tax shown on their phone bills and other records.

Taxpayers can request the telephone excise tax refund, as well as file their entire tax return electronically, for no cost using the IRS's Free File program. Seventy percent of Americans are eligible for the Free File program because they earn an adjusted earned income of \$52,000 or less. Free File can only be accessed through IRS.gov. Once on the home page, click on "2007 Free File" and follow the directions.

2007 FILING SEASON STATISTICS

Cumulative through the weeks ending 3/17/06 and 3/16/07

Individual Income Tax Returns	2006	2007	% Change
Total Receipts	67,077,000	67,703,000	0.9%
Total Processed	62,726,000	63,798,000	1.7%
E-filing Receipts:			
TOTAL	46,874,000	49,401,000	5.4%
Tax Professionals	33,664,000	35,105,000	4.3%
Self-prepared	13,210,000	14,296,000	8.2%
Web Usage:			
Visits to IRS.gov	82,974,000	90,424,000	9.0%
Total Refunds:			
Number	56,320,000	55,186,000	-2.0%
Amount	\$133.993 Billion	\$139.297 Billion	4.0%
Average refund	\$2,379	\$2,524	6.1%
Direct Deposit Refunds:			
Number	39,765,000	42,057,000	5.8%
Amount	\$107.529 Billion	\$117.429 Billion	9.2%
Average refund	\$2,704	\$2,792	3.3%