

IRS HAS UNDELIVERED REFUNDS FOR THOUSANDS OF TAXPAYERS

WASHINGTON -- As the holidays approach, thousands of taxpayers may soon be extra thankful. The Internal Revenue Service is trying to locate them and send them their 1998 federal tax refunds.

The IRS is looking for 102,840 taxpayers whose checks were returned as undeliverable by the U.S. Postal Service. These checks total almost \$72 million, an average of almost \$700 per check. They could not be delivered because of incorrect names and addresses or because taxpayers moved and did not give the IRS or the U.S. Postal Service their new addresses.

If you are due a refund and have not received it, call the IRS toll-free assistance number at 1-800-829-1040.

The IRS says the best way to avoid the possibility of a lost, stolen or undeliverable refund is by having it deposited directly to your bank account. Just put the required bank account information on your tax return. This year more than 23.5 million taxpayers chose this option when they filed.

Taxpayers can avoid delays in getting their refunds by sending IRS their new address on Form 8822, "Change of Address," when they move. This form is available by calling 1-800-829-3676 or by downloading it from the IRS Web site at www.irs.gov.

The number of refunds issued vastly exceeds the number of undelivered refunds. Through October 1999, the IRS has processed nearly 90 million refunds, totaling more than \$139 billion. The average refund was \$1,551.

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