



November 23, 2010

Lost Refund Checks Poser for IRS

In Texas, more than \$12 million worth of refund checks are being held by the IRS because they have been returned in the mail. Likewise in Colorado, refund checks returned to the agency as 'undeliverable' totals \$2,156,188.

More than 9,820 Texans are owed the \$12 million whereas in Colorado, 2,120 Colorado taxpayers are owed checks averaging \$1,017.00 per person. On the other hand, the average amount owed to Texans is \$1,251. In Houston, 1,518 residents among 1,963 Harris County residents have not received their tax refund checks. This would Houston residents have more than \$1.9 million in unclaimed tax refunds whereas more than \$2.4 million is due to residents in Harris County.

The IRS has made it simple for you to check the status of your refund check and update your mailing information. If a refund check is returned as undelivered by the postal service, the IRS would list the details on their website. So to check for the status of your refund, visit the IRS website at <http://www.irs.gov> and click the 'Where's My Refund?' link. You can also update your current address there.

Alternatively, you could check your status over the phone by calling 800-829-1954. You will be given instructions on how to get your refund when

you call.

Across the country, a total of 111,893 taxpayers have yet to receive their tax refund checks. The dollar amount of the checks is \$164.6 million. The national average amount of each check is \$1,471 this year compared to \$1,148 last year. Some taxpayers are owed more than one check. The rise of more than 28% in average refund check amounts this year may be due to the government measures to give more tax breaks and expand existing tax credits like the Earned Income Tax credit.

To avoid lost checks, the IRS recommends that you file your tax returns electronically through e-file. That way, all your refunds are also electronically deposited into your bank account. E-file also eliminates errors on the part of the IRS on tax refunds and greatly speeds up the process of you getting your money.

It's also important to remember that the IRS never contacts anyone through email to inform them of their refunds. Such emails are typically efforts to steal your identity and you should not reply, open attachments or click on any link in these emails. This is also to avoid downloading a virus that could destroy your computer.