IRS Seeks to Return More Than $2.9 Million in Undeliverable Refunds

Local News

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The Internal Revenue Service is looking for Washington State taxpayers who are missing 2,652 refund checks totaling more than $2.9 million that were returned to the IRS by the U.S. Postal Service due to mailing address errors. The average refund is $1,099.

All a taxpayer has to do is update his or her address once. The IRS will then send out all checks due. The vast majority of checks mailed out by the IRS reach their rightful owner every year. Only a very small percent are returned by the U.S. Postal Service as undeliverable.

If a refund check is returned to the IRS as undeliverable, taxpayers can generally update their addresses with the “Where’s My Refund?” tool on IRS.gov. The tool enables taxpayers to check the status of their refunds. A taxpayer must submit his or her social security number, filing status and amount of refund shown on their 2008 return. The tool will provide the status of their refund and in some cases provide instructions on how to resolve delivery problems. Taxpayers checking on a refund over the phone will be given instructions on how to update their addresses. Taxpayers can access a telephone version of “Where’s My Refund?” by calling 1-800-829-1954.

Avoiding Future Problems

The IRS encourages taxpayers to choose direct deposit when they file their return because it puts an end to lost, stolen or undeliverable checks. Taxpayers can receive refunds directly into personal checking or savings accounts. Direct deposit is available for filers of both paper and electronic returns.

The IRS also encourages taxpayers to file their tax returns electronically because e-file eliminates the risk of lost paper returns. E-file also reduces errors and speeds up refunds.