



Department of
Taxation

Ohio's Fight Against Tax Fraud is Working

Ohio taxpayers are proving ID theft defenses prevent refund fraud

(February 20, 2015)

(Columbus) – Ohio Tax Commissioner Joe Testa today thanked Ohio taxpayers for helping the state in the fight against I.D. theft and attempts to steal the public's money.

“We have significantly strengthened our security procedures to combat unprecedented levels of tax fraud. It's requiring extra effort for some taxpayers and the Ohio Department of Taxation (ODT), but it has been worth it. People understand that it requires serious measures to fend off this very real cyber-threat.”

Through February 18, more than 1.3 million tax returns have been filed with about 874,000 requesting a state income tax refund. About half of the refund requests have been selected for additional screening to ensure that they were not filed by an I.D. thief.

A new security screen has been added this year; the I.D. Confirmation Quiz housed on the ODT web site – **tax. Ohio.gov**. Taxpayers whose return gets selected for additional screening are sent a letter from the department directing them to take the quiz. “About 97 percent of taxpayers taking the quiz are passing. That proves they are who they say they are,” Testa said. “Just recently we saw a report of banks losing possibly a billion dollars to digital thieves. In Ohio last year, we had criminals try to steal more than \$270 million dollars in tax refunds. This scale of criminal activity clearly requires us to do all we can to stop these thieves.”

Taxpayers who receive the letter steering them to the I.D. Confirmation Quiz, can expect a refund in 15 days or less after passing the quiz; taxpayers who are not directed to take the quiz can expect a refund in about a week. Taxpayers can automatically find out when their refund might be issued using the [Check My Refund Status](#) tool on the department's web site. If a refund is not delivered in the projected time frames, taxpayers are advised to call ODT at 1-800-282-1780 and talk with a tax agent.

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