



Montana Tax News You Can Use

An e-newsletter for tax preparers and those interested in the state's tax system

Identity Verification Letter

As a result of the increased filing of false returns, the Department of Revenue recently implemented additional security measures to protect taxpayers from identity fraud. One measure involves mailing an identity verification letter to a sampling of taxpayers that requested a refund on their 2014 Montana individual income tax return.

The letter, which includes a tax verification code, asks the taxpayer to go to our website or contact our call center to respond to a few questions before we can release the refund. The first set of letters was mailed to taxpayers earlier this week. We will monitor the success of this new program and make a decision about its effectiveness before we proceed on a larger scale.

We appreciate your cooperation and patience as we attempt to discourage fraudulent tax return filings. We are concerned about the delay taxpayers are experiencing before receiving their refunds and are working hard to get the refunds paid as quickly as possible while ensuring that we are also doing everything we can to prevent fraud.

Filing Deadline for Form MW-3

The due date for filing the Montana Annual Withholding Tax Reconciliation form (MW-3) is February 28. However, since this date lands on a Saturday this year, the due date has been extended to Monday, March 2.

On or before this date, you are required to file the following with the department:

- Montana Annual Withholding Tax Reconciliation form (MW-3) supporting the withholding reported on the W-2 and 1099 forms
- Wage and Tax statement (W-2) for each employee to whom Montana wages were paid, with or without withholding
- 1099s with Montana state withholding - must be filed with the MW-3
- 1099s without Montana state withholding - must be filed with a federal Form 1096

Property Tax Relief and Reporting Deadlines for Property Owners

We'd like to remind owners of real and personal property and livestock about important deadlines approaching soon.

March 1 deadlines:

- Reporting **class eight business equipment**, which can be done online through Taxpayer Access Point (TAP) at <https://tap.dor.mt.gov/> or by paper form.
- Livestock owners must complete and return a **livestock reporting form** to the department either online at ReportYourLivestock.mt.gov or in the mail.
- For **nonprofit, religious, or charitable organizations** to be considered for property tax exemption for 2015.

April 15 deadlines:

- The **Property Tax Assistance Program (PTAP)** provides property tax relief to anyone who meets the qualifications and there is no age restriction.
- The **Montana Disabled Veteran (MDV)** exemption provides property tax assistance to qualifying disabled veterans and their surviving spouses.
- The **Elderly Homeowner/Renter Tax Credit (2EC)** is a refundable income tax credit of up to \$1,000 available to taxpayers based on household income and is for anyone age 62 or older as of December 31, 2014.

In addition, if taxpayers made an investment in their home or other buildings last year to **conserve energy**, they may be able to claim a Montana income tax credit equal to 25 percent of the qualifying expenses and up to a maximum credit of \$500 per taxpayer. For more information about this credit, go online to revenue.mt.gov/home/individuals/taxrelief_energy.

For **additional details** about these deadlines, property tax relief programs, and credits, see the news release online at <http://revenue.mt.gov/home/newsroom>.

For **applications and forms**, we encourage you to go online to revenue.mt.gov/property-forms or contact your local Department of Revenue office. For **questions and more information about qualifications**, visit revenue.mt.gov or phone the department's call center at 1-866-859-2254, or 444-6900 if calling in Helena.

Property Tax Calculator: A Great Tool for Estimating Benefits

Many property owners miss out on the tax relief that our property tax assistance programs can offer them.

We're trying to change that by making it as easy as possible for property owners to find out if they qualify for these programs. That's the purpose of our online property tax assistance calculator, a tool that property owners can use to:

- determine if they can receive the Elderly Homeowner/Renter Tax Credit (2EC)
- determine if they might be eligible for the Property Tax Assistance Program (PTAP)
- estimate the approximate benefits they would receive with these two programs and determine whether it would be more beneficial for them to apply for one or both of the programs

Please let your clients (at least those you think might benefit from these programs) know about the calculator, which you can find on the Department of Revenue website [here](#).

Approved Tax Software for Tax Year 2014

Every year, tax software vendors seek approval to participate in the Montana federal/state electronic filing program. We test the software of each vendor to ensure it is compatible with our electronic filing system. You can find the latest approval status of each software product and the forms they support [here](#).

For more information, email dore-services@mt.gov.

Tax Facts

For 2015, as of February 6:

- Total number of individual income tax returns we've processed: 70,372
- Number of individual tax returns we've received electronically: 69,311
- Number of individual income tax refunds we've issued: 35,813
- Average amount of refunds: \$385.88

Contact Us

Visit us online at revenue.mt.gov; email us at DORCustomerAssistance@mt.gov; or, call us toll-free at (866) 859-2254 or in Helena at (406) 444-6900.



It pays to follow Revenue on [Twitter](#): @MTRRevenue

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Montana Tax News You Can Use is published weekly during tax season and periodically at other times. It is for anyone who helps people file taxes and meet their tax responsibility and for anyone simply interested in the state's tax system. It keeps you posted on what's happening at the department, lets you know about new ways of preparing and filing taxes and brings you up-to-date on some of the issues and trends popping up during tax season in Montana. To subscribe, visit the [newsroom](#) page on our website and click on the "Tax News You Can Use" tab.

We welcome your suggestions and ideas for articles, as well as your questions and comments. Please send them to DORWritingProject@mt.gov.



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