



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 1, 2008

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Governor Blagojevich encourages Illinoisans to Go Green, file taxes electronically

*Illinois Department of Revenue says filing electronically saves paper,
increases processing efficiencies*

CHICAGO – In the final weeks of tax season, Governor Blagojevich encourages Illinois taxpayers to Go Green and file their taxes electronically. When taxpayers file their taxes electronically, the Department of Revenue sees a reduction in paper use throughout the tax process; from the printing of fewer tax booklets to receiving fewer forms in the mail from taxpayers. By saving paper, taxpayers help reduce the amount of trash going into landfills, and also reduce energy use and pollution associated with manufacturing, transporting, and recycling new paper products.

To help illustrate this point, if the 2.7 million electronic IL-1040s that the department received last year were paper IL-1040s stacked one on top of each other, they would reach a height of over 369 feet or $\frac{1}{4}$ of the height of the Empire State Building. Additionally, if these electronic IL-1040s were paper IL-1040s and put end to end they would start at Springfield, Illinois and end up just outside of San Diego, California.

“Most Illinoisans aren’t necessarily thinking about the environment when they file their taxes,” said Governor Blagojevich. “Every year more Illinoisans file electronically because it is faster and easier. But today we encourage Illinoisans, as they consider their deductions, to Go Green and file electronically.”

In Springfield, Department of Revenue Director Hamer took reporters on a tour of the Willard Ice Building to illustrate how much paper was saved when Illinois taxpayers chose e-filing. Director Hamer highlighted the Department’s paper and mail handling operations which takes in millions of tax forms each year. The Department also sent out about 1.9 million tax booklets to Illinoisans this year, down from past years because more and more filers are filing electronically.

The Illinois Department of Revenue projects that for the first time ever, more filers will chose to file electronically than file by paper. In addition to making the filing process faster and more convenient for taxpayers, the E-filing option provides a significant cost savings to the state. Since the beginning of the 2008 tax season, electronic filers have saved the state \$2.4 million in paper processing costs and postage.

The Department of Revenue has also made strides in electronic filing methods offered to business, which are on track to increase electronic filing by 55.4 percent or around 550,000 returns. Electronic filing programs offered by the department are on target to receive a combined total of 4.8 million returns and applications this fiscal year. Beginning in fiscal year 2008, electronic filing offerings were expanded to include additional excise tax applications.

The Illinois Department of Revenue has enjoyed a consistent increase in electronic filers since the program began in 1991. So far this year, more than 2 million returns have been filed electronically which is a 15 percent increase over this time last year. Over 1.1 million taxpayers have taken advantage of the direct deposit option, an increase of over 19 percent from this time last year. IDOR continues to encourage taxpayers to file electronically on its website tax.illinois.gov or ask about E-Filing when they visit their tax preparer.

“This year we have identified yet another reason Illinois taxpayers should take advantage of filing their Illinois taxes electronically. It cuts down on a mountain of paper,” said Director Hamer. “For those last-minute filers who have yet to file – we encourage you to go green and file electronically.”

“With only two weeks remaining before the tax filing deadline, we’re encouraging taxpayers to e-file their tax returns,” said Otis Damron, IRS Outreach Manager for Illinois. “E-filing offers many benefits including faster refunds, more accurate returns and paperless return filing. For those with adjusted gross incomes of \$54,000 or less, free federal tax return preparation and e-filing is available through the IRS Free File program. Free File is available on the IRS Web site at IRS.gov.”

Nearly all Illinois taxpayers can file for free on the department’s web site at www.tax.illinois.gov, and many can also file their federal taxes online at www.irs.gov.