



## Buy US Savings Bonds with your Tax Refund

Starting in January 2010, you will have a unique opportunity to increase your savings by purchasing United States Series I Savings Bonds with your tax refunds. Buying Savings Bonds is a great way to start or increase overall savings. In addition, it is easy when you use IRS Form 8888 – just ask your tax preparer!

## What are U.S. Savings Bonds?

U.S. Savings Bonds are savings instruments for individual savers issued by the U. S. Department of the Treasury.

For purposes of this program, only Series I US Savings Bonds are being offered on tax returns. Series I Bonds are sold at face value (a \$50 bond costs \$50), and grow in value for up to 30 years. You must purchase bonds *with your tax refund* in increments of \$50. In any single calendar year you can purchase up to \$5,000 of Series I Savings Bonds under this program.

You may redeem Savings Bonds for principal and accrued earnings anytime after the first 12 months after you purchased it (or earlier if you live in an area affected by a natural disaster). If you redeem a Savings Bond within the first five years you hold it, the three most recent months' interest will be forfeited. After five years, no penalty will apply when bonds are redeemed.

Series I Bonds pay interest based on a combination of a fixed rate (which remains the same throughout the life of the Savings Bond) and a semiannual inflation rate, which is updated each May and November. Savings Bonds accrue interest until you redeem them or until they reach their final maturity in 30 years.

The current interest rate for Series I Savings Bonds that will be in place during the 2010 Filing Season is 3.36%. The 3.36% includes a fixed rate of .30% (which will be applicable for the entire life of the I Bond purchased) and a 3.06% annualized rate of inflation. The 3.06% interest rate will apply from the time of purchase through April 30, 2010 when a new semi-annual rate of interest will be announced.

The interest earned by purchasing and holding Savings Bonds is subject to federal tax at the time you redeem the bonds. However, interest earned on Savings Bonds is not taxable at the state or local level.

## How can you buy Savings Bonds at a VITA or TCE Site?

For the 2010 Filing Season, you can choose to save all or part of your refund by requesting Savings Bonds on an IRS Form 8888, *Direct Deposit of Refund to More Than One Account*. The use of Form 8888 to purchase Savings Bonds will generally require

that you have another account in which to deposit the remaining amount of your refund after the purchase of Savings Bonds.

During the 2010 Filing Season, you will be able to purchase Savings Bonds with your tax refunds in multiples of \$50, up to the yearly maximum of \$5,000. Purchasing Savings Bonds in multiples other than \$50 will instead trigger the issuance of paper refund check to the taxpayer for the entire amount of their refund.

Just tell your tax preparer you want to buy Savings Bonds with part of your refund!

## **Receipt of Series I Savings Bonds**

Taxpayers who purchase US Savings Bonds with their tax refunds will receive their paper bonds in the mail at the address used on their tax return. The issuance of the Savings Bonds could take up to three weeks. You will generally receive the paper bonds after you have received the remainder of your tax refund from the IRS.

For bond purchases in amounts of \$250 or less made with a tax refund, you will receive Series I bonds in \$50 denominations. For bond purchases in excess of \$250, the first \$250 will be fulfilled with \$50 bonds, then the remainder will be fulfilled with the fewest possible additional bonds.

Errors on the return that change the refund amount will result in a failed bond purchase. If you have a prior tax or other obligation (child support, loan payment), IRS will not fulfill the bond request, and will mail the entire refund amount to you using a paper check.

To check the status of a bond purchase, you may go to [Where's My Refund](#) on IRS.gov or call 1-800-829-1954. If the IRS has processed the refund and placed the request for the bond, then please contact the Treasury Retail Securities Site at 1-800-245-2804.