

Tax Matters

connecting and informing
employees



OFFICE OF INCOME TAXATION
COMMUNICATIONS & TRAINING BRANCH

Fall 2011

CONTENTS:

DOR Spotlight	1-2
Extraction Section	
CSI	3
Registered Tax Return Preparer Test Will Be Required by IRS	
WorkWISE	4
Control Key Shortcuts	
HealthWISE.....	5-6
Are Germs Bugging You?	
Tax Bytes	7-8
WELCOME ABOARD!	9

DOR Spotlight Extraction Section

Location: Basement, State Office Building

Workforce: 12 Employees

Management:

- Jerry McCarty—Director, Division of Operations
- Donna Sayre-Craig—Branch Manager, Document Prep and Miscellaneous Processing Branch
- Walter Crecelius—Supervisor, Extraction Section

The Extraction Section, commonly referred to as “the Mail Room”, is an essential part of the Division of Operations and is currently comprised of a supervisor and 11 staff members. Their mission is to obtain, sort, extract, prepare and transport or forward mail within the Department of Revenue. The staff typically handles over 400 different Revenue forms and vouchers and returns, as well as eight Unemployment forms, and a multitude of general day-to-day taxpayer correspondence. During Fiscal Year 2010, over 3.1 million pieces of mail were received by the Extraction Section through the U.S. Postal Service and almost 5,000 additional pieces were received through other carriers such as UPS, FedEx and DHL.

Incoming Mail Operations

On most days, a two-person Extraction Section team departs at 7 a.m. daily to pick up the mail from the Frankfort post office. A second run is made at 8:30 a.m. to pick up the certified and Post Office (PO) Box mail. The U.S. Postal Service typically pre-sorts the Department’s mail by zip code and address and places the envelopes into trays and flat mail into tubs which are then transported back to the State Office Building.

Manual Mail Sorting

From the trays and tubs, the Extraction Section manually removes the thin “rainbow” mail (Sales and Use Tax, Withholding Tax, Notices of Tax Due, Individual Estimated Payments, etc.) and Unemployment mail for processing and extraction by the automated equipment. Any misdirected mail is returned to the U.S. Post Office. Certified mail and



Locating Lost or Missing UPS, FedEx or USPS Mail

The following information is helpful for the Extraction Section to locate a specific piece of lost or missing mail:

- Sender’s Name
- Carrier’s Name
- Intended Recipient’s Name
- Carrier’s Tracking Number (if applicable)
- Number of Pieces Mailed
- A Description of the Contents
- Date Mailed to and Date Received by Revenue
- Name of Person Signing for the Mail

mail that requires special handling is processed and/or broken down and forwarded to the appropriate section or person. Returned Revenue mail is typically forwarded back to the originating section, and finally the P.O. Box mail is opened following normal procedures or sent unopened to the appropriate section for action.

Electronic Mail Sorting and Extraction

The thin “rainbow” mail and Unemployment mail are sorted electronically using a multi-purpose sorter. This machine is capable of sorting approximately 40,000 envelopes per hour and can determine the type of mail by scanning a bar code on the front of the envelope, as well as determine the thickness of the mail by sending a pulse through the envelope. Based on this information, the machine determines whether to place the mail in a rapid extraction desk bin for envelopes containing a return with a remittance and a check stub and/or correspondence or a multi-purpose extractor bin for envelopes containing only a return or a return and remittance without a check stub and/or correspondence to be opened.

Finally, any mail too thick or large for automated extraction must be opened manually. After all the mail is extracted and prepared, it is placed in a designated box for delivery or forwarding to the appropriate section.

Incoming and Outgoing UPS and FedEx Mail

UPS and FedEx mail deliveries are made twice daily to the Extraction Section. Mail simply addressed to the Department of Revenue is logged in and prepared following normal processing procedures. Mail addressed to a specific person in Revenue is assigned to an employee in Station 35, located in the KSOB basement, who logs in the mail and notifies the recipient. All outgoing UPS mail is handled by Station 35 and must be received no later than 2:30 p.m. for the 3:00 p.m. daily pick-up. All outgoing FedEx mail is picked up from the table located just inside the Extraction Section. The office sending the mail is responsible for making arrangements with FedEx and having the mail in the Extraction Section prior to the agreed upon pick-up time.

The Big Picture

Always busy, the peak times for the Extraction Section are generally during April and October, when the filing deadlines occur for Individual Income Tax. During these peak times, it’s not unusual for DOR employees from all over the building to volunteer to help sort and open mail for several days to help the Extraction Section maintain efficiency and achieve its overall mission. This is an example of DOR teamwork at its best!

Extraction Branch		
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Brandi “Tyree” Phillips		47942
Chris Lewis		45368
Eric Redmon		47973
Jackie Holman		45381
Jason Vanderpool.....		49795
Norman Murphy.....		45394
Peggy Smith		45384
Roy “Tony” Dean		45382
Shaun Yunt		45372



WORKWISE

Control Key Shortcuts

Shortcuts save you a lot of time when traveling. The same is true when using a computer. It is possible to apply shortcuts when working with a document in Microsoft Office by simply holding down the control key and pressing the appropriate letter key. The following table is a list of shortcuts that may save you time.

Note: This table is intended to be used with Microsoft Office 2007 and may not be valid for older versions of this software.

Ctrl + Letter	Microsoft Excel	Microsoft Word	Microsoft PowerPoint
A	Select All	Select All	Select All
B	Bold	Bold	Bold
C	Copy	Copy	Copy
D	Duplicate cell above	Font	
E		Center Justify	Center Justify
F	Find	Find	Find
G	Go to	Go to	Guidelines
H	Replace	Replace	Replace
I	Italic	Italic	Italic
J		Full Justify	Full Justify
K	Hyperlink	Hyperlink	Hyperlink
L		Left Justify	Left Justify
M		Indent	New Slide
N	New	New	New Presentation
O	Open	Open	Open
P	Quick Print	Quick Print	Quick Print
Q	Quit		
R	Clear a Cell	Right Justify	Right Justify
S	Save	Save	Save
T		Hanging Indent	Format Font
U	Underline	Underline	Underline
V	Paste	Paste	Paste
W	Close	Close	Close
X	Cut	Cut	Cut
Y	Redo	Redo	Redo
Z	Undo	Undo	Undo



WISE

Are Germs Bugging You?

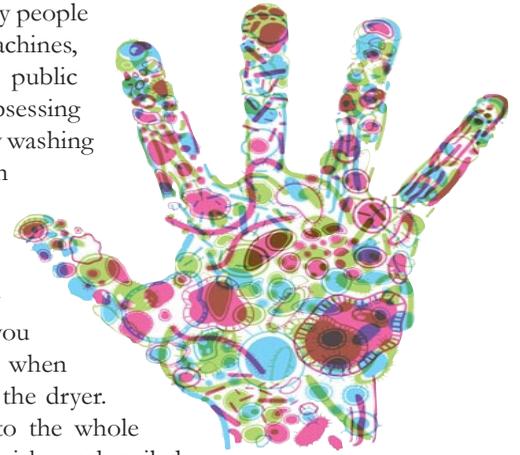
When was the last time you washed your hands? How many surfaces have you touched in the past hour, or even in the last minute? According to the Center for Disease Control, over 200 viruses cause the common cold, and these germs can live on a surface from one to six hours. A germ is defined as a microorganism which causes disease. You may not realize all of the places where germs like to hide. Below is a list revealing the top eight places in our daily lives where germs have been found to thrive.

8. **Your Office Telephone**—When was the last time you disinfected your phone? We use the office phone many times every day and rarely think to wipe it down on a regular basis. The same goes for our computer keyboards, mouse and cell phones. These items come in contact with our mouth and hands where germs reside. Wipe down your office equipment with a disinfectant wipe to kill 99.99 percent of bacteria and viruses.
7. **The Bathtub**—The place where you clean yourself is actually quite dirty; harboring many types of bacteria, including staphylococcus, which may cause a nasty skin infection. When you cleanse yourself of bacteria it settles in the tub which is the perfect moist environment for bacteria to multiply. Spray the tub weekly with a disinfecting cleaner and scrub. Rinse and dry the tub well to prevent more bacteria growth.
6. **Mats and Machines at Health Clubs**—Think about how many people sweat all over the mats and machines at health clubs. Regular use of these surfaces without disinfecting them may spread skin infections and viruses. Do not rely on the last person who used the machine to wipe it down. Wipe the machine or mat down before and after you exercise with a disinfecting wipe and shower shortly after your workout to reduce your contact with any bacteria you may have picked up. And always wear flip-flops when showering at the gym.
5. **Playgrounds**—Children are little germ factories and are good at spreading their bodily secretions. Children touch their grubby hands to their face and mouth often. Although it is tedious to hover over your child every time they touch a potentially germy surface, you can reduce the spread of germs by simply disinfecting their hands periodically throughout the day and especially before eating. Playing outside on a sunny day will also help to cut down on the transfer of germs, as bacteria have less of a chance of surviving in hot dry places.
4. **Handbags**—Recent studies found that women's purses may contain tens of thousands of bacteria. Many types of bacteria found include the kind known to cause skin and eye infections, as well as salmonella and E. coli. Think about the places where you normally put your bag or purse. Instead of placing it on the floor, hang it on a hook when in the restroom or a restaurant. Do not set your bag on your kitchen table or other surfaces used for eating to avoid spreading germs to a clean area. Also, stick to leather or vinyl bags, which are easier to clean than cloth.

3. **Public Touch Spots**—Common places that many people touch include ATMs, elevators, vending machines, shopping carts, drinking fountains, door knobs, public pens, sink faucets, and refrigerator handles. Obsessing over everything you touch will not help, but simply washing your hands before you touch your mouth or begin to eat greatly reduces your daily contact with germs.

2. **A Load of Wet Laundry**—When you wash dirty undergarments and other soiled clothes together you run the risk of transferring *E. coli* to your hands when you place the wet clothes from the washer into the dryer. One soiled undergarment can spread bacteria to the whole load and the washing machine. To minimize the risk, wash soiled clothes in hot water and dry the clothes as soon as possible for a minimum of 45 minutes.

1. **Your Kitchen Sink and Sponges**—Kitchen sinks have shown to be dirtier than most bathrooms with more than 500,000 bacteria per square inch in the drain alone. Most kitchen sinks are used to wash things that come in contact with dirt, uncooked meats, and mildew. Sponges or dishrags pick up the same bacteria that are around the sink. To avoid spreading these bacteria, spray your sink down with a disinfecting spray and deep clean it twice a week with a bleach and hot water mixture. Sponges may be sanitized by putting them in the dishwasher or microwaving for one to two minutes daily.



Although you cannot see germs with the plain eye, they are all around us. However, there are some simple daily habits to help reduce the amount of germs that make contact with your body.



- A. Frequently wash your hands with soap under warm water for at least 20 seconds.
- B. Push open doors with your arms instead of your hands and use a napkin to open the bathroom door when you leave. There are no guarantees that the last person out of the bathroom washed their hands.
- C. Try not to touch your face as much as possible. Germs love warm, moist areas like your mouth, nose, and eyes.

Tax Bytes



April 15th

In the United States our tax year runs based on the calendar year from January 1 to December 31. That means that each April, we file our taxes based on the money we earned during the previous calendar year.

The tax year, in the United Kingdom, however, runs from April 6 to April 5 of the following year and applies to income tax and other personal taxes. For example, their 2009-10 tax year ran from April 6, 2009 to April 5 2010. Why the odd dates? According to Wikipedia, this tradition started in the mid-18th century when English quarter days were used for collecting rents on farm land.

The tax system was based on a tax year ending on Lady Day, March 25, when a brand new calendar was adopted in September, 1752. The new calendar differed by 11 days from the old one and tax authorities did not want to lose revenues from those 11 days. Therefore, the start of the tax year was moved to April 5, and later changed to April 6 in 1800.

Fraudulent Tax Returns Surge 181 Percent

The number of taxpayers attempting to claim inflated refunds is on the rise. It seems more people are willing to “push it” on their taxes based on a recent report released by the IRS. In that report, the IRS identified 335,341 tax returns claiming \$1.9 billion in fraudulent refunds as of March 4, 2011. That is a 181 percent increase from the same period last year.

Many taxpayers tried to boost their refunds or reduce their tax liability by claiming deductions and credits for which they did not qualify. For example, the Earned Income Tax Credit, aimed at helping lower-income taxpayers, has been a large source of fraud, with people falsely lowering their income to qualify or claiming children they do not have. The IRS estimates that 23 to 28 percent of EITC credits are wrongfully paid to Americans every year, totaling \$11 to \$13 billion.

Preparing for the Worst

Create an Electronic Backup Set of Records

- You should keep a set of backup records in a safe place away from the original set. Also, keep in mind that financial institutions provide documents and statements electronically, available on the Internet. These documents can be downloaded to a backup storage device or burned to a CD.

- If you prepared your taxes using tax software, always save your return as a PDF file. This step can assist you when you need to access your tax returns, or if documentation is required for loans.
- As an additional safeguard, always send your PDF file(s) to your email address so that even if your computer has a problem, you can still access your PDF file from any computer via email.

Order Transcripts or Copies from the IRS

- If you still cannot access backup copies of your tax return, the IRS can help. You may request backup copies of previously filed tax returns and all attachments by filing Form 4506.
- You may also request transcripts by filing Form 4506-T. Transcripts show most line items including your adjusted gross income and may also be ordered online via the IRS website or by calling (800)908-9946.

Disasters

- Special tax law provisions may help taxpayers and businesses recover financially from the impact of a disaster especially if the federal government declares their location to be a major disaster area. Click on IRS's Disaster Assistance and Emergency Relief for Individuals and Businesses for more information.
- If you are affected by disaster, you may also call (866)562-5227 to speak to a specialist trained to handle disaster issues.
- For additional information regarding assistance in the event of a disaster, check the IRS Disaster Losses Kit for Individuals.

Document Valuables

- Taxpayers should photograph or videotape contents of their home to help prove the market value of items for insurance and casualty loss claims. Photographs and videotapes should be stored with friends and family.



Apple Facts

7500 varieties of apples are grown throughout the world.

The pilgrims planted the first United States apple trees in the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Apple trees take four to five years to produce their first fruit.

Apples were the favorite fruit of ancient Greeks and Romans.

Apples are a member of the rose family.

The Lady or Api apple is one of the oldest varieties in existence.

In 1730 the first apple nursery was opened in Flushing, New York.

America's longest-lived apple tree was reportedly planted in 1647 by Peter Stuyvesant in his Manhattan orchard and was still bearing fruit when a derailed train struck it in 1866.

Archeologists have found evidence that humans have been enjoying apples since at least 6500 B.C.



Central Files

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 LaMarr Wallace

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 Shannon Gillum
 Lauren Gutermuth
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YOUR INPUT IS REQUESTED:

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