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**Department of Revenue Debuts New Web Site at dor.wa.gov**

***User-centered design, innovative online features make doing business easier***

**OLYMPIA, Wash.**, April 9, 2007 — The Washington State Department of Revenue today launched a new web site that incorporates more streaming videos, interactive tutorials, and other features that will help businesses find information quickly and file more accurate tax returns.

The new site was developed using extensive usability testing by volunteer businesses.

“We are focused on delivering the highest level of customer service possible, and today that must include effective electronic tools and services on par with the best of what people are used to seeing from the private sector,” said Cindi Holmstrom, Director of the Department of Revenue.

“Citizens and taxpayers expect and deserve a state government that is accessible, efficient, and easy to do business with,” Holmstrom added.

Significant changes stemming from hands-on research with volunteers include a new navigation scheme with “plain language” text and titles that better represent the way users seek information and services from the site.

A new video instructing high-technology businesses on various tax incentives available to them joins Revenue’s growing library of streaming videos accessible from the site. Workshops introducing the basics of Washington’s tax structure, presented in English and Spanish language versions, and another one targeted to the construction industry are among the popular informational videos produced by Revenue staff for on-demand viewing.

Holmstrom said expanding e-services offerings is a key priority of the Department's strategic business plan. Listening and responding to the ideas and concerns of taxpayers and business groups is paying off in positive customer experiences on-line and improved efficiency within the department.

Some recent success stories include:

- The Department delivered more statistical information directly to the public through online publications and a new online query that lets visitors build their own reports. Requests for information that required staff time dropped from a high of 3,600 in 1995 to less than 600 in 2006, freeing staff to perform other fiscal research.
- In January, the Department's busiest month of the year, a record 120,160 state tax returns were filed electronically, and \$894.3 million in taxes paid. Increased E-filing has contributed to the steady decline in overall error rates on tax returns over the past six years, reducing overhead for both taxpayers and the Department.
- The Department returned a record amount of unclaimed property to a record number of claimants since launching an online claims filing system last year, the first of its kind in the nation. The percentage of auto-paid claims requiring no handling by staff increased to 62 percent of all claims paid, e-claims nearly doubled to more than 90,000, and the amount paid out increased by more than \$8.5 million to \$34.6 million.

To view the new web site, visit <http://dor.wa.gov>.

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