



## **Todd Feinman**

By Michael Cohn  
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Identity Finder CEO Todd Feinman offers tips on protecting tax returns from hackers and identity thieves this tax season in this podcast:

Password-protect all tax returns that you print to PDF from your tax software so that Social Security numbers and bank account numbers are protected.

Configure all peer-to-peer file sharing programs to disable the sharing of your personal folders so identity thieves can't download saved tax return data.

Never e-mail SSNs or even files used to prepare tax returns as they usually contain personal information.

If downloading employee or contractor IRS W2 or 1099 forms make sure you use a strong password online when registering for them.

If you receive an e-mail purporting to be from the IRS that requires personal information to process a return, rebate, or refund, delete it. The IRS does not contact taxpayers via e-mail and this is more likely a phishing attack.

When you postal mail tax returns, use certified mailed from a secured location like the post office or an official USPS collection box, and do not let it sit in the box overnight, as it could be stolen.

Any financial documents containing personal information that were used to prepare tax returns should be permanently shredded from your computer or encrypted with a password.

Install the latest updates to your operating system so known Windows or Mac vulnerabilities can't be exploited by hackers.

Don't save your password in your Web browser when accessing banks and other institutions because it could be stolen if you ever get a virus, Trojan, or are hacked. Make sure any bank account information submitted online related to taxes (i.e., refunds, payments) is done through a secure Web site.