



Your Money

Government Help Now Available To Assist In Finding Old Or Lost Savings Bonds And Getting Cash You Can Use

(NAPSA)—A growing number of Americans are engaged in a treasure hunt—some in their own home. They're looking for U.S. Savings Bonds, the Series E in particular. The good news is that there's a new Web site designed to help them in their search.

Series E U.S. Savings Bonds that are at least 30 years old—that's nearly all E bonds—have stopped earning interest. That means bond holders can actually lose money to inflation by not cashing them, so it's in the interest of bond holders to find the bonds and get the cash.

Many of these bonds are worth at least four times their face value—sometimes much more. For example, a \$100 Series E bond bought for \$75 in 1960 is worth more than \$700 today.

So why aren't people cashing their bonds? In many cases, they have simply been forgotten. A great number of baby boomers now in their 50s and 60s may have received the bonds when they were children as graduation or birthday gifts, or bought them using savings stamps at school. Or they may have purchased them through the Payroll Savings Plan when they first started working.

While it's a smart idea to start your search for bonds in old family "hiding places," you can also visit www.treasuryhunt.gov. The U.S. Department of the Treasury created the site to help people locate unredeemed mature bonds.

If the bonds were purchased in 1974 or later, you just have to



It's in the interest of those holding Series E Savings Bonds to cash them if the bonds have reached maturity. Otherwise, they may lose money due to inflation.

enter the Social Security number of the owner or purchaser. The Treasury Hunt database will match the number against unredeemed bonds. There are also instructions on the site for finding bonds issued before 1974.

For the vast majority of owners, cashing bonds will not affect their tax rate, but may provide an after-tax windfall. Federal income taxes are only due on the interest earned, while bonds are completely free of state and local income taxes.

You can find out more about unredeemed savings bonds, including how to cash them at your local financial institution, by visiting www.treasuryhunt.gov. You'll also find a calculator there that tells you how much old bonds can be worth.