

FDIC Consumer News

Winter 2015

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Buying or Refinancing a Home?

Seven do-it-yourself tips for choosing and managing a mortgage

Do you have a mortgage loan or are you in the market for one? With new disclosures and other consumer protection rules, and fluctuations in interest rates, it's good to review some key strategies to keep costs down for your home loan.

“Since a mortgage may be the largest and most complex financial obligation you will ever enter into, be sure to do your homework before and after you commit to a loan,” said Jonathan Miller, a Deputy Director in the FDIC’s Division of Depositor and Consumer Protection.

Here are tips on keeping borrowing costs low and thinking ahead about issues that might arise.

For Anyone Looking for a Mortgage

1. Remember that loan programs can change and lenders’ policies may vary, so research new opportunities before applying for a mortgage. For example, more lenders are beginning to offer borrowers the chance to obtain a mortgage with a smaller down payment. Why is that happening?

Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac will now buy mortgages from lenders that have down payments as low as 3 percent. This change could lead to more lenders lowering their down payment requirements for borrowers. But be careful. Making a smaller down payment typically means you will pay higher monthly mortgage payments and have greater borrowing costs over the long run.

Also, in January 2015, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced a cut in Federal Housing Administration insurance premiums on mortgages with low down payments. This change will make the FHA’s low down payment loans more affordable.

2. Don’t be shy about shopping around for a home loan. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) and the Federal Housing

Finance Agency recently released the results of a survey showing that nearly half of the consumers who took out a mortgage to buy a home in 2013 did not shop around before applying. “Failing to shop means money lost for consumers,” the CFPB said. “Consumers who consider the product offerings of multiple lenders or brokers may save substantial sums.”

As part of the announcement, the CFPB launched an online toolkit called “Owning a Home” (www.consumerfinance.gov/owning-a-home) to help consumers as they shop for a mortgage and make smarter decisions on home loans.

It’s best to compare offers from several different lenders before making a final decision. And keep in mind that you do not have to use a lender suggested by your real estate agent or anyone else involved in your home purchase.

3. Understand the pros and cons of adjustable-rate mortgages. Also known as ARMs, these mortgage loans generally start out with low introductory rates for a certain time period. A low rate may be appealing, but be sure you know how much that rate could rise, when, and under what circumstances. By law, the lender must disclose this information to you. When the lender considers your ability to repay the loan, it must take into account possible rate hikes during the first five years of the loan.

“You also shouldn’t assume that you will have the option to refinance an ARM or sell your home to escape higher payments later on,” said Elizabeth Khalil, a Senior Policy Analyst at the FDIC. “Mortgage interest rates have been low over the past few years, but they may be higher in the future, meaning that refinancing your ARM may not significantly lower your payments. This is also a reason to think seriously about a fixed-rate loan, which may be somewhat more expensive but has predictable payments.”



Whether it’s a fixed or adjustable rate, be sure you understand all the terms of any loan you are considering before you decide whether to take it. If you have questions, consider consulting with a HUD-approved housing counseling agency (see contact information at the end of this article) or an attorney.

4. Watch for new mortgage disclosures. The CFPB has developed new disclosures that, by law, lenders will be required to use beginning on August 1, 2015. For most new mortgages and refinancings, four previously required disclosures of settlement costs and key loan terms (including the “Good Faith Estimate” provided within three days of applying for a mortgage and the “HUD-1 Settlement Statement” of actual costs at closing) will be replaced by two new forms intended to provide clearer and more useful information to consumers. The CFPB has detailed information about the new disclosures at www.consumerfinance.gov/knowbeforeyouowe.

5. Consider how a mortgage could affect you in retirement. Carrying significant mortgage debt can create payment problems for retirees living on a fixed income. Some consumers may even delay retirement due to mortgage debt. “Even if you’re many years from retirement, consider now how long you intend to carry a mortgage, have a plan for paying it off, and be sure that timeframe lines up with your goals for career and retirement,” said Kathleen Keest, also an FDIC Senior Policy Analyst.

For Current Homeowners

6. Keep an eye on the servicing of your loan. The entity that collects your payments and performs other duties for your mortgage lender, perhaps including responding to inquiries and initiating foreclosure actions against delinquent borrowers, is referred to as the loan servicer. It may or may not be the same company from which you got your loan, and it may be replaced by another servicer over the life of the loan, perhaps multiple times. By law, you must receive advance notice when the servicing of your loan is transferred to a different company. And under new rules, you cannot be charged a late fee if an overdue payment to the new servicer is received within 60 days after the transfer of duties.

“If your loan servicer changes, carefully review your account to confirm that your payments are being accurately credited,” suggested Senior Policy Analyst Glenn Gimble. “Also by law, prior to closing on your loan you must receive a disclosure about how often the lender transfers servicing. The answer may influence your decision to accept a loan from this lender or to choose a different lender, maybe one that services its own loans.”

7. Research the potential risks and benefits of home equity products. A loan secured by a homeowner’s “equity” in a home can be an economical way to borrow money because the interest rate is typically low and, for many people, the interest paid will be tax deductible. Generally, the equity is the current appraised value of a home minus what is owed on the mortgage. “As home values rise in a number of areas, home equity products are again becoming more popular, but it’s important to keep in mind that, just like with a mortgage, your home is at risk of loss if you fail to pay the loan,” cautioned Gimble.

There are two basic types of home equity products. One is a one-time loan for a lump sum, typically with a fixed monthly payment. The other is a home equity line of credit (HELOC), which allows homeowners to borrow money one or more times up to an approved

credit limit, usually at a variable interest rate.

Also, some HELOCs have low introductory interest rates that can reset at a higher rate. The federal banking agencies have issued guidance to financial institutions on the importance of early notice to borrowers about impending rate resets and making help available to those facing rate increases that could be difficult to pay. See the Winter 2013-2014 edition of *FDIC Consumer News* (www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/news/cnwin1314/heloc.html) for more on HELOCs and rate resets.

For further information on the issues addressed here and other topics related to mortgages, search for previous articles by topic in *FDIC Consumer News* at www.fdic.gov/consumernews. Also visit www.mymoney.gov and consumerfinance.gov/mortgage.

If you think you need one-on-one assistance from an independent, reliable source on topics such as buying a home, getting a loan or avoiding foreclosure, consider contacting a HUD-approved housing counseling agency (start at 1-800-569-4287 or www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/hcc/hcs.cfm) or an attorney. 🏠

Wheels and Deals: Finding an Auto Loan That’s Good to Go

Buying a car can be exciting, but don’t lose sight of how you will pay for it. Here are our latest tips on financing a vehicle through an auto loan.

Review your credit reports long before you go to purchase a car. Correcting inaccuracies, such as an erroneous history of late payments, can help you get the best loan possible. Fixing mistakes may also save you money on car insurance.

To request free copies of your credit reports, go to www.annualcreditreport.com or call 1-877-322-8228. This is the only authorized site to obtain your free credit reports.

Consider getting pre-approved for a loan from at least one financial institution before you go to the dealership. A financial institution, such as one where you already have an account, may offer you a better interest rate than what you get offered through the dealership. And, don’t share with the dealer the interest rate you’ve been offered in case you want to explore loan options at the showroom.

Consumer advocates also suggest that you not even tell the dealer whether you’ve already been pre-approved for a loan until after you’ve negotiated the purchase price. That’s because some



dealers may be less flexible on the price of the vehicle if they don’t expect to make money on the financing.

Don’t hesitate to seek different financing offers. You may be surprised by how comparison shopping for an auto loan can save you money. While submitting multiple loan applications generally can slightly lower your credit score, those for car loans made within a short period (such as 14 days, according to some credit scoring models) generally are grouped together to minimize the effect.

Compare loan offers based on the Annual Percentage Rate because the APR includes certain fees as well as the interest rate. “The size of your monthly payment is important, but

continued on the next page

resist attempts to focus your attention on the monthly payment instead of the APR,” said Luke W. Reynolds, Chief of the FDIC’s Outreach and Program Development Section. “Remember, the APR reflects the true cost of the loan.”

The longer your loan, the more you pay in interest. “Long-term loans may lower your monthly payment but you will pay more in interest over the life of the loan,” Reynolds added. “You may even be offered a loan that is longer than you expect to keep the car.”

Keep good records of your loan quotes. Before signing on the dotted line, review the loan agreement (the contract) and make sure any potential fees, the interest rate, and other key terms match what you were initially told.

Don’t allow anyone to steer you toward a larger purchase and a bigger loan than you will be able to comfortably pay. In addition to your monthly loan payment, you need to budget for the cost of auto insurance, licensing fees and taxes.

Leave the car at the dealership until your loan terms are finalized. If a dealer offers you a “contingent” or “conditional” loan agreement and lets you drive the car home, the loan terms may change and be less advantageous for you when you return to finalize the purchase.

If you have a problem with your lender or its debt collection practices that you can’t fix on your own, help is available. Consider filing a complaint with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau at <https://help.consumerfinance.gov/app/vehicleconsumerloan/ask>.

For more information, see articles in the Fall 2012 issue of *FDIC Consumer News* (www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/news/cnfall12/autoloans.html) and the Spring 2012 edition (www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/news/cnspr12/autoloans.html). The Federal Trade Commission also has resources at www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0209-buying-new-car. [f](#)

Are You Ready to Leave Your Credit Cards at Home ... and Pay by Smartphone?

Paying for purchases by smartphone is becoming increasingly viable.

Three major companies now enable consumers to buy goods at participating merchants with their credit or debit card by just waving a smartphone over the payment terminal. In fact, a major smartphone manufacturer recently teamed up with many banks and merchants to make the service available to anyone buying the newest version of its smartphone. What should you know about using your smartphone to pay in a store or a restaurant?

You need the right equipment. Your smartphone must contain a contactless or “NFC” (near field communication) computer chip that allows it to “talk” to the payment terminal via a wireless connection, as well as a digital wallet to store your payment card information. If you are buying a new smartphone, you can ask the salesperson if it has an NFC chip. For a phone you already have, check the “settings” menu and look for “NFC.” Your phone may already have a digital wallet feature. You can also download one through an app store or other online marketplace.

You have to load your credit or debit card information onto the phone. The setup procedure can be as easy as taking a picture of the front and back of the card with the mobile wallet application. The app will then send it to your bank for approval and to confirm that it’s really you. Some mobile wallets may allow consumers to load “loyalty” cards from favorite retailers. You may also receive store or restaurant coupons or other offers through your phone, based in part on your recent purchase history with the company.

Most merchants that accept mobile payments are large national chains, but smaller stores are beginning to

sign up. A merchant must first install card terminals that accept contactless payments; they look different than the swipe terminals you are used to and display the symbol shown below.



As with any electronic transaction, pay attention to security issues. According to Jeff Kopchik, a Senior Policy Analyst at the FDIC, “Many security experts believe that mobile payments are more secure than swiping your magnetic stripe credit card because the mobile service keeps your



Photo: NFC Forum

credit number in encrypted form and does not transmit it to the merchant. But you still should make sure your phone is protected, such as with a password, so it cannot be accessed by a thief. Some of the newest smartphones use fingerprint readers to control access, which can be secure and convenient.”

Also make sure your phone “times out” and re-locks itself after it isn’t used for a short period of time. If you lose your smartphone, notify the bank or other issuer of any credit or debit cards that may be loaded on the phone.

“Remember that if there is a problem with a transaction, you will receive the same federal protections that otherwise apply to the underlying payment source,” noted FDIC Senior Policy Analyst Elizabeth Khalil. “For example, if the transaction drew on a credit card for payment, you will be protected by the same laws and regulations that cover credit cards.”

To learn more, start by contacting your smartphone service provider or credit card issuer. [f](#)

Scams: When Telemarketer Calls Don't Ring True

As previously reported in *FDIC Consumer News*, federal rules prohibit a variety of unfair or deceptive advertising practices, and they enable consumers to stop most telemarketer calls by placing their personal phone and cell numbers on the National Do Not Call Registry (www.donotcall.gov). We are returning to the telemarketing topic because the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and other agencies have reported increases in complaints involving telemarketers that may be perpetrating scams or otherwise violating federal and state laws.

According to the FTC, the vast majority of the violations of the do-not-call rules involve “robocalls,” which are pre-recorded phone messages that companies send to thousands of phones at the same time. Some companies continue to make robocalls to people who have signed up for the Do Not Call Registry, using fake “caller IDs” that make them hard to identify or trace. These calls might be scams.

Michael Benardo, manager of the FDIC's Financial Crimes Section, explained one scam involving a pre-recorded message supposedly from a financial institution or a government agency, describing some “urgent” matter. “If you return the call, you might be asked a series of personal questions using the touch-tone keypad on your telephone. The information you are asked to provide, such as account numbers, personal identification numbers (PINs), birth dates, and passwords, can be used to access to your bank account or commit identity theft,” said Benardo.

He added, “Your financial institution or a government agency would never contact you asking for such information. When in doubt, call your institution or the government agency that the call is supposedly from by using a phone number that you know or that you find, not the number in the message.”

Because it may be difficult to get your money back, remember the following:

If you get a robocall, hang up. Don't press “1” to speak to a live operator

and don't press any other number to (supposedly) get your phone number off a call list. Doing so will probably just lead to more robocalls.


Never give out personal identification information over the phone unless you initiate the call and know the other party is reputable. This includes bank account and credit card numbers, Social Security numbers, account passwords and PIN numbers.

Thoroughly check out any offer before agreeing to it. Always ask for key details in writing. Carefully read all applications and contracts so that you understand your potential costs, risks and requirements. You also can research an offer with help from your state or local consumer protection agency (start at www.usa.gov/directory/stateconsumer) or your state Attorney General's office (www.naag.org/current-attorneys-general.php).

Assume that any offer that “sounds too good to be true” — especially one from a stranger or an unfamiliar company — is probably a fraud. “Common examples of scams include fake lottery winnings, bogus job offers, and promises of an investment paying significantly above market rates,” said Kathryn Weatherby, a fraud examination specialist for the FDIC.

Resist pressure to make a decision immediately. Here are a few red flags that can help you spot a scam:

- You're told to send money or provide bank account information before you receive anything in return;
- You sense a reluctance on the part of the caller to answer questions or provide written information; and
- You're told you already agreed to pay money but you don't remember that.

If you think you're a victim, file a complaint with the FTC (at www.ftc.gov/complaint or toll-free at 1-877-382-4357) and with your police. For more tips on topics like reducing robocalls, avoiding phone scams and stopping unwanted mail and calls, start at the FTC's Web site (www.ftc.gov). 

Have a Complaint About a Bank? Here's How a Regulator Can Help


If you think you're not being treated fairly by your bank, what should you do? As we have previously recommended in *FDIC Consumer News*, the quickest way to fix a problem is to go directly to the institution. But what if that does not help? Consider contacting the bank's federal regulator.

“The FDIC receives thousands of complaints every year from customers seeking assistance,” said Kirk Daniels, a supervisor in FDIC's Consumer Response Center. “For each complaint within our jurisdiction, we contact the institution to review its actions and compliance with federal consumer protection laws.”

Information collected through complaints is shared with FDIC staff to help identify potential risks for further review at upcoming examinations.

However, federal regulators cannot take action against a bank if it complied with applicable laws. Likewise, regulatory agencies cannot settle disputes over whether an institution complied with the terms of a loan or deposit contract, which is a private matter governed by state law. “We don't have the authority to determine whose version of the events is more accurate,” added Daniels.

If you need help, you may start with the FDIC by calling toll-free 1-877-275-3342, completing a customer assistance form at www2.fdic.gov/StarsMail/index.asp, or writing to the FDIC Consumer Response Center, 1100 Walnut St., Box #11, Kansas City, MO 64106. If the FDIC is not the correct federal agency to handle your complaint, we will forward it to that agency or provide you the contact information.

For more information about resolving complaints, start with our article in the Spring 2012 *FDIC Consumer News* at www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/news/cnspr12/complaint.html. 

More Answers to Common Questions

Some things to know about the FDIC's online deposit insurance calculator, debt collectors and prepaid debit cards

Consumers often seek help from the FDIC with questions relating to their bank accounts. That's why *FDIC Consumer News* occasionally features questions and answers that readers may find useful. Check out the latest collection below.

Do I have to provide personal information if I use the FDIC's online deposit insurance calculator to find out if my deposits are fully covered?

"No. 'EDIE,' the FDIC's Electronic Deposit Insurance Estimator, does not need personal identification information such as your actual name, Social Security number or account number," said Martin Becker, Chief of the FDIC's Deposit Insurance Section. "EDIE is a site that can help you confidentially calculate your deposit insurance coverage."

For an accurate analysis of your insurance coverage, though, you will need to list account owners or beneficiaries, but you can type in aliases like Jane Doe or Child #1. Also enter information such as the type of account and the dollar amount to reflect your bank accounts correctly. You can use hypothetical amounts if you want to explore opening new accounts or adding to existing account balances. And when you're done, EDIE doesn't store any of the details you key in, nor can it track users.

To use EDIE, go to www.fdic.gov/edie. You can speak with an expert to discuss your FDIC deposit insurance coverage by calling 1-877-ASK-FDIC (1-877-275-3342).

What should I do if I have a problem with a bill collector, and what are my rights as a consumer?

Complaints about debt collectors are common, with allegations ranging from harassment to fraud (such as when criminals use fake documentation to trick victims into paying bills that don't exist).

Even if you had not paid your bills as required, you have the right to be treated fairly under the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act. For example, within five days after initial contact, the debt collector must provide a written notice stating who you owe money to and how much is due. And if you make a written request within 30 days of the initial contact, the debt collector cannot contact you again until they mail you proof of the debt. "Consumers can use this information to make sure that they are actually responsible for paying the money and that it is not someone else's responsibility. They also can make sure the amount owed on a legitimate debt is accurate," explained Edward Hof, an FDIC Consumer Affairs Specialist.

Also under the law, consumers have protections against violence, obscene language, repeated calls and other abuse. Without the consumer's permission or a court order, debt collectors cannot contact consumers before 8 a.m. or after 9 p.m. And, if you tell a debt collector in writing that you refuse to pay, the collector can only contact you one more time – either to tell you that all communications have ended or that it will take a specific action, such as suing you to collect the debt.

To learn more, start with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (www.consumerfinance.gov or call toll free 1-855-411-2372) and/or the Federal Trade Commission (www.consumer.ftc.gov/topics/dealing-debt or call toll-free 1-877-FTC-HELP). Another valuable resource is your state Attorney General's office (www.naag.org/current-attorneys-general.php).

Due to security concerns, my bank put a temporary "hold" on my reloadable prepaid debit card. Can the bank do that? And what consumer protections do I have if a thief used my card?

"Yes, if the bank that issues a prepaid card suspects a security risk, in most

cases it will put a hold on the use of the card, but it also can cancel the card and issue a new one," said Heather St. Germain, an FDIC Senior Consumer Affairs Specialist. "These precautions can be inconvenient for the customer, but they help limit potential fraud."

As for federal consumer protections, your liability for an unauthorized transaction varies depending on the type of card. For example, debit card users are liable for no more than \$50 of fraudulent charges as long as they notify their financial institution within two business days of realizing that their card was lost or stolen. With reloadable prepaid cards, federal law treats "payroll" cards (for employer deposits of salary or government benefit payments) the same as debit cards, but currently there are no federal consumer protections limiting losses with general-purpose prepaid cards. That could be changing, though, because the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) has proposed a new rule that would increase federal consumer protections for prepaid financial products. Also, industry practices may already limit your losses to some extent, so check with your card issuer.

To help protect yourself, don't divulge your prepaid card number to anyone who calls, e-mails or otherwise contacts you unexpectedly. Regularly review your account for unauthorized transactions (if you are unsure of how to do so, review the documentation that came with your card) and notify the financial institution that issued your prepaid card immediately if you see any discrepancies. Also, if your prepaid card doesn't work, contact the card provider, explain your situation, find out what happened and ask what you need to do to access your funds.

To learn more about reloadable prepaid cards, start at the CFPB Web site at www.consumerfinance.gov. If new consumer protections are adopted, we'll report on them in *FDIC Consumer News*. And for additional information on prepaid cards, see our Summer 2012 issue at www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/news/cnsum12/paymentcards.html. [📄](#)

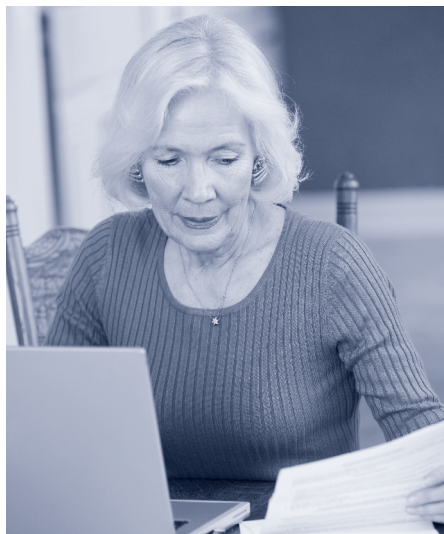
How and Where to Save: Our Latest Tips

Everyone knows they should save money to help pay for their future needs or wants, but not everyone knows the best or easiest ways to save. That's why **FDIC Consumer News** regularly features tips on where and how to save efficiently. Our most recent suggestions appeared in the Spring 2014 (www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/news/cnspr14/savingandinvesting.html) and Fall 2014 (www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/news/cnfall14/financialcheckup.html) issues. Here are a few more ideas.

Review how and where you are saving for retirement. Options include workplace retirement plans, Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) offered by many banks and investment companies, and the U.S. Treasury Department's new "myRA" (myRetirement Account), which is a simple, safe, and affordable savings program to help individuals start saving for retirement. The myRA program offers a new type of Roth IRA, guaranteed by a new U.S. Savings Bond that costs nothing to open and carries no risk of losing value.

Because myRA accounts do not have minimum contribution requirements, savers can contribute the amount that best fits their budget. During the first phase of the program, myRA accounts can be funded through automatic payroll deduction. To open an account or learn more about the myRA program, including eligibility requirements, go to www.myra.treasury.gov or call toll-free 1-855-406-6972.

Set savings goals for specific reasons. "Designating accounts that you will regularly contribute to for a particular purpose, such as for a vacation or the next holiday season, will help motivate you to meet your goals by a certain deadline," said Luke W. Reynolds, Chief of the FDIC's Outreach and Program Development Section. "Some banks offer 'club' accounts that promote regular, small savings for a certain reason, but you can use regular deposits into any savings account to reach your target."



Certificates of deposit (CDs), which provide a predetermined fixed- or variable-rate interest payment for a set time period (usually three months to five years), also may be an option.

Find more money to save by cutting expenses. A great resource for ideas on how to use your money wisely is MyMoney.gov, the U.S. government's main Web site about personal finances with information from more than 20 federal agencies, including the FDIC. Start at the "Spend" page at www.mymoney.gov/spend/Pages/spend.aspx.

If you get a large, one-time "windfall," consider using some or all of it to help build your emergency savings. Start by checking whether you have enough in a federally insured deposit account to cover three to six months of essential living expenses. If you don't have that much in your "rainy day fund," consider adding funds from a tax refund, an inheritance, or other new-found money. This account may help pay for major unexpected expenses or tide you over during a disruption in your income.

For more ways to save, including ideas for keeping banking costs down, search for articles in **FDIC Consumer News** at www.fdic.gov/consumernews and check out the FDIC's Money Smart financial education program at www.fdic.gov/moneysmart. 

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For More Help or Information

Go to www.fdic.gov or call the FDIC toll-free at 1-877-ASK-FDIC (1-877-275-3342)

News Briefs

See our money and banking tips for the tax season. Consider reviewing our most recent article on ways to make tax time less taxing. The Winter 2013/2014 *FDIC Consumer News* (www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/news/cnwin1314/taxtips.html) provides guidance on how to guard against tax-related identity theft, such as when a criminal calls and impersonates an IRS employee to ask for immediate payment or for confidential information. (Note: The most common form of identity theft reported to the Federal Trade Commission in 2014 was tax-related.)

You'll also find information on free tax preparation services offered through the IRS or IRS-coordinated programs for many taxpayers, plus ideas to put some of a tax refund into savings or toward paying down debt.

The FDIC has launched a pilot program to identify ways banks

are combining financial education with safe, low-cost savings accounts for school children. FDIC-insured banks in the program are working with schools and/or nonprofit organizations to help children open savings accounts in conjunction with financial education programs. The FDIC ultimately hopes to highlight promising approaches for encouraging the development of good money management and savings habits at a formative age.

To learn more, start at www.fdic.gov/youthsavingspilot.

A new federal Web site can make it easier for consumers to conduct a thorough background check of financial professionals, including brokers who offer FDIC-insured certificates of deposit. The site from the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) — www.smartcheck.gov — enables

consumers to access a variety of databases from different government and self-regulatory organizations to learn more about the background of a financial professional.

FDIC Consumer News has previously cautioned readers to be careful when buying bank CDs from deposit brokers because the accounts they sell may involve more risks than working directly with an insured bank. Reminder: The FDIC does not have the authority to examine, approve or insure deposit brokers, who can be anyone from an individual transacting business alone from a home office to a major financial services firm. For more information, see our article in the Spring 2013 issue (www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/news/cnspr13/cdsfrombrokers.html). 