

HOT LINKS

Valuing Your Gold & Resources for the New IRA Rules

A look at where to go on the Web to find information or services that are useful, substantial and available for free or at a reasonable price.

As mentioned in Briefly Noted on page 4 in this issue, one way to take advantage of the rise in gold prices is to sell your unwanted gold jewelry. Alternatively, if there is gold jewelry or coins that you intend to keep, it may be worthwhile to calculate an updated value to ensure you have adequate insurance coverage.

There are a few sites that can help you do this.

Dendritics Precious Metal Calculator www.dendritics.com

Go to Automated Calculations and click the arrow next to Precious Metal Value Calculator.

This on-line calculator provides updated prices for gold, silver and platinum jewelry. Simply separate the jewelry by metal type (be sure to separate gold by carats), weigh it and enter the number of ounces into the calculator.

Keep in mind that the value generated is based on the spot (market) price of gold, and that if you try to sell you will only receive a percentage of this number.

American Gem Society www.americangemsociety.org

If your jewelry has precious stones or could be considered to be “vintage,” it may have additional value beyond the type of metal used. The only way to be sure is to have a reputable jeweler examine the piece. The American Gem Society has a searchable database of appraisers. You can search by state or zip code.

American Numismatic Association www.money.org

Gold coins may be worth more than their weight. To determine whether this is the case, consult with a reputable coin dealer. The American Numismatic Association has a dealer listing on its Web site and is a good place to start. In addition to contact information, the directory lists areas of specialty and how long the dealer has been in business.

CME Group www.cmegroup.com

The CME Group provides quotes for gold, silver

platinum and palladium futures contracts. The contract listed at the top of the table is the most current contract. As expiration dates go out further into the future, the price should rise. This is because there is a cost to both parties to exchange a commodity at some point in the future. If prices for later-dated contracts are lower than those for more current contracts (“backwardation”), then traders expect prices to fall in the future.

Quotes for metals futures are found by clicking on Metals Products in the Products list on the left side of the home page. You can also access quotes for other futures contracts—such as oil, the euro and U.S. Treasuries—from the Products list.

Help With the New IRA Rules

IRS Publication 590 www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p590.pdf

In addition to the new Roth IRA conversion rules (see the article in this issue starting on page 12), there are other changes regarding IRAs that went into effect on January 1. These rules include an increase in the income limit for contributing to a Roth IRA. The new adjusted gross income limit for married couples filing jointly (or qualifying widows (ers)) is \$177,000.

IRS Publication 590 discusses IRAs, including the new rules regarding contributions and Roth IRA conversions. Be sure to read the edition labeled “For use in preparing 2009 returns.”

Computerized Investing Roth IRA Conversion Spreadsheet www.aaii.com/ci/jan10/rothconvert.xls

If you are a subscriber to AAII's *Computerized Investing* publication, this spreadsheet will help you determine whether converting to a Roth IRA makes sense. The spreadsheet is based on Christine Fahlund's November 2009 *AAII Journal* article (available at AAII.com) and T. Rowe Price's Roth IRA Conversion Worksheet.