

by-election or referendum. The onus is on you, as the voter, to return the ballot in time for it to be delivered in Canada on the day of the election. For further information, contact Elections Canada.

Taxation Issues

Maintaining Canadian Residency

The concept of Canadian residency is a taxation issue and not an immigration matter. If you live outside Canada for part of the year and keep residential ties with Canada, you will be considered a factual resident of Canada. Once you have established a home and have been employed in Canada, you cannot lose this residency status simply by leaving the country. You must permanently and overtly sever your Canadian connections and declare your departure on your income tax return. Snowbirds, therefore, do not have to worry about accidentally forfeiting their Canadian residency, regardless of their immigration status.

Taxation

People who spend part of the year in another country but maintain their residence in Canada pay

Canadian income taxes as if they had never left. Nonetheless, taxation issues arise if the other country imposes its own taxes. If you spend your winters in a country that has a tax treaty with Canada, such as the United States or Mexico, you are protected from double taxation, even though you may have to file tax returns in both countries. If you are spending part of each year in a non-treaty country, you should do your own research to find out what your tax situation is. The principal question for you, as a retiree, is whether your Canadian-source pension and investment income will be taxed. Some countries impose taxes on income from the rental of your home in the off-season.

You can obtain a list of tax treaty countries by calling the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency or by consulting their Web site. A helpful pamphlet for Canadian snowbirds in the United States, entitled *Canadian Residents Going Down South*, is available from the Agency and can be found on the Internet.

U.S. Tax Returns

The U.S. tax situation is worthy of special mention because parts of the United States are so popular