

Office of Privacy Protection



Top Ten Tips to Keep Your Identity Safe

Safeguarding Information for Your Future

W I S C O N S I N

Guard your social security number

Don't carry your Social Security Card with you and don't use the number for a pin or password unless the financial institution, merchant or other business absolutely requires it.

Protect your mail

When mailing something, particularly if it contains a check or other personal information, mail it from a secure location – don't put it in an open box designated for outgoing mail.

Stop pre-approved credit card offers

You can have your name removed from credit bureau marketing lists by calling toll-free to 888-5OPTOUT (888-567-8688) or visiting the Opt Out website at www.optoutprescreen.com.

Request a Social Security Statement

The Social Security Administration sends an annual statement to all card carrying US Citizens that have been employed after an individual turns 25 years of age. Until then, you will not receive one unless you request it. Request a statement at 1-(800)772-1213 or online at www.socialsecurity.gov.

Shred, shred, shred

Invest in a shredder & use it! Shred bills, receipts, and credit card offers that you used to throw in the garbage. Shred any other items that contain personal or financial information.

Know what you're downloading

All downloading carries some risk. Viruses, spyware, and other software can come along with whatever it is you're downloading.

Beware of blogging

Never post any personal identifying information other than your first name. This includes your date of birth, your address, and your phone number.

Have good security software and update it frequently

In order to be safe on line, you should have firewall, anti-virus, and anti-spyware software.

Don't go phishing

Identity thieves convince a lot of people that what is actually a fake website is the real thing. They pose as our bank, credit card company or even the IRS and ask us to "verify" information like account numbers, social security numbers or passwords. Legitimate companies or agencies don't ask for personal identifying information over the phone or on line.

Use passwords that are not easy to guess

Names, addresses, birthdates, and even names of pets and friends can easily be figured out by those who know you even casually. Use passwords that are longer and make no sense to anyone but you.

If you believe your identity has been stolen, contact the Wisconsin Office of Privacy Protection at 1-800-422-7128 or email us at WisconsinPrivacy@datcp.state.wi.us. Visit our website at privacy.wi.gov for more information.