

# IDENTITY THEFT AND FRAUD ALERTS

## To help prevent identity theft

- Shred all documents with any personal information: name, address, phone number, social security number, credit card numbers
- Locking your file cabinets
- Password protect your computer
- Do not give anyone else your credit or debit cards or PIN
- If your debit card can also be used as a credit card, use it as a credit card rather than using your PIN
- When you have a house sitter, have the post office hold your mail
- Monitor your accounts online
- Pull your credit reports at least twice a year
- Never respond to e-mails with personal information these are "Phishing" scams
- Use gel pens to write checks – these inks cannot be easily dissolved
- Get a locking mailbox
- Monitor your bank accounts regularly
- Do not write down your password or PIN
- Use a credit card (not a debit card) for out of sight transactions (i.e. for waiters who disappear with your card)
- Make sure no one is "shoulder surfing" by watching from a nearby location as you punch in a telephone calling card number or listens in on a conversation in which you are providing debit or credit cards over the phone in a public place
- If you receive a telephone call that indicates it is your credit card company checking on a purchase, do not provide any information to them. Hang up and call the credit card service number on the back of your card and let them know what has happened. If there is a question with your account, you can address it with them.

## What to do if you are a victim of identity theft:

- Contact your Police Department immediately to file a report
- Contact one of the 3 credit-reporting agencies or a local credit reporting agency who can pull from the top 3 credit reporting agencies

- Contact the creditors for any accounts that have been tampered with or opened fraudulently. Speak with someone in the security or fraud department and follow up with a letter
- Keep accurate records of everything involved in your efforts to clear up fraud...records of all telephone calls and correspondence
- Notify the Office of Inspector General if your social security number has been fraudulently used
- Change all your account passwords
- Change your driver's license number
- Contact your telephone and utility companies to prevent a con artist from using a utility bill as proof of residence when applying for new cards.

### **Fraud – Jury Duty:**

In this con, someone calls pretending to be a court official who threateningly says a warrant has been issued for your arrest because you didn't show up for jury duty. The caller claims to be a jury coordinator. If you protest that you never received a summons for jury duty, the scammer asks you for your Social Security number and date of birth so he or she can verify the information and cancel the arrest warrant. Sometimes they even ask for credit card numbers. Do NOT give out the information.

*If you give out any of this information, your identity just got stolen.*

The scam has been reported so far in 11 states, including Oklahoma, Illinois and Colorado. This scam is particularly insidious because they use intimidation over the phone to try and bully people into giving information by pretending they're with the court system.

The FBI and the federal court system have issued nationwide alerts on their websites, warning consumers about the fraud.

A lottery scheme has surfaced claiming to be a Lottery Award Notification from the International Lotto Commission in Spain. In the letter being sent, it references the La Primitiva Lottery Promotions Program having a mix-up of numbers and names, which makes you a lottery winner in the 3rd category splitting \$815,610 among 27 winners. It requires personal information to be faxed for identification, which allows them access to your identity (passport, drivers' license, etc). IDENTITY THEFT is behind this scheme.

In the event that you receive a letter like this, DO NOT contact them or respond in any way. DO contact your Police Department Investigations Unit.