



# Stealing your identity – Stealing your money

**T**HERE are many ways people can have their identity stolen or be defrauded. It can happen to you – or your business. Anytime someone can get hold of your personal information, such as cheques, debit cards, credit cards, etc., they can start stealing your identity, changing your identity, or stealing your money. Following are a few recommendations to protect the identity of your employees and you.

## Credit Cards

### Accepting credit cards:

- Insist on the card being present and match the signature on the card.
- If the card will not swipe, make a manual imprint of the card.
- Follow your bank machine agreement.

### Personal or company credit cards:

- Know with whom you are dealing when giving out your credit card number over the phone or the Internet.
- Do not let your card out of your sight.
- Check your credit card statement against your receipts.

## Debit Cards and Bank ATMs

- Watch for evidence of tampering at the ATM or credit card machine. Criminals can use hidden cameras to get your PIN number, insert foreign objects in the card slot, or attach readers to the front of the card slot.
- Be aware of people looking over your shoulder when you are keying in your PIN number.

## Cheque Fraud

- Criminals go to great lengths to get hold of your cheque, modify it and then try to cash it or use it. This has happened even when state-of-the-art laser security cheques were used. To limit this exposure you can control the storage of your unused cheques, the usage of the cheques, and the reconciliation of the cheques.

## Hotel Room Cards

- Although room key cards differ from hotel to hotel, one key card was found to have the customer's personal address, hotel room number, hotel dates, and credit card information. Be sure not to lose the card, demagnetize it before returning it, or keep the card and destroy it.

## Computer and Internet Security

- If access can be gained to your computer or computer files, either in person or through the Internet, protective steps must be taken. Consider locking documents and files, using passwords, firewalls,

## Resources:

- The Better Business Bureau – [www.bbbmanitoba.ca](http://www.bbbmanitoba.ca) or [www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org)
- The Consumer Measures Committee – [www.cmcweb.ca](http://www.cmcweb.ca)
- The Federal Trade Commission – [www.consumer.gov/idtheft](http://www.consumer.gov/idtheft)
- The Canadian Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada – [www.privcom.gc.ca](http://www.privcom.gc.ca)
- VISA – [www.visa.ca/en/merchant/fraudprevention](http://www.visa.ca/en/merchant/fraudprevention)
- MasterCard – [www.mastercard.com/canada/education/fraud](http://www.mastercard.com/canada/education/fraud)
- Federated Insurance – [www.federated.ca](http://www.federated.ca) Federated provides limited identity theft coverage, for more information contact a Federated Sales Representative.

and spam detection and virus protection software. Web sites also can be restricted.

- Vigilance and software are two ways of protecting your system. Banks will not contact you to go to their Web sites to update personal information.
- Web sites should be accessed through the Internet and not through a link in an e-mail.

## Employee and Customer Information

- You are responsible for your employees' and customers' personal information. Files and information must be controlled and protected. Any paper containing personal information of you, your employees, or customers should be shredded.

At Federated Insurance, we believe loss prevention is a critical component of your risk management program. ■

The information provided in this article is intended to be general in nature and may not apply in your province. The advice of independent legal or other business advisors should be obtained in developing forms and procedures for your business. These recommendations are designed to reduce the risk of loss, but should not be construed as eliminating any risk or loss.

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