

Press Release

Security Breaches and Identity Theft Avoidance Methods

5/12/04

The Board of Tax Practitioners would like to encourage practitioners and consumer's to take precautionary measures in avoiding a security breach and the possibility of identity theft.

Identity theft is an increasing crime in Oregon. The Board of Tax Practitioners is suggesting its licensees take the following steps to avoid security breaches and/or identity theft of information they have possession of in their office client files:

- 1) Adding "firewall"/proprietary software on computers that contain confidential data.
- 2) Setting up individual passwords for access to computers.
- 3) Installing an alarm system within the office and/or home.
- 4) Maintaining locking file cabinets and filing any confidential data and information.
- 5) Filing any "pin" numbers and/or access codes to banking/credit card information in a secured area.

Although there are many more precautions that individuals can take to protect themselves against a security breach/identity theft, should you fall victim, contact the fraud department of any of the following credit bureau's to report a fraud alert:

- A) Equifax: (800) 525-6285
- B) Experian: (888) 397-3742
- C) Transunion: (800) 680-7289

You do not need to contact more than one of the credit bureau's listed above as the bureau you notified will notify the other two bureaus automatically upon confirmation of your credit fraud. Once you have reported a fraud alert, creditor's **must** contact you prior to making any changes to your existing accounts, charges for unusual purchases/purchases in excessive amounts and/or opening any new accounts.