

IDENTITY THEFT - PREVENTION FIRST

- 1) Never give anyone a credit card number or related information over the phone unless you initiated the call or are dealing with someone you know. Avoid confirming such information to a stranger on the telephone.
- 2) Do not carry your social security number, birth certificate, passport, or extra credit cards with you.
- 3) When using an ATM or public telephone, shield the viewing screen or keypad so that others cannot read your Personal Identification Number (PIN).
- 4) Do not write your social security number or credit card numbers on checks. The social security number is a prime target of criminals and provides them with the key to unlock a variety of personal information.
- 5) Order a copy of your credit report once a year from the three major credit bureaus - Experian, Equifax, and Trans Union. Check for false charges that may indicate fraud. Credit report order fees generally start at \$8.
- 6) Shred all documents containing account numbers or other personal information before disposing of them. Bank and other financial statements, ATM and credit card receipts, and pre-approved credit offers are among criminals' favorite sources of information.
- 7) Finally, keep a list of all credit card account numbers and expiration dates so that you can contact creditors quickly.

Source: Bureau of Crime Prevention & Youth Services
Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office