ONLINE PRIVACY TIP CARD

The Internet now touches almost all aspects of our daily lives. We are able to shop, bank, connect with family and friends, and handle our medical records all online. These activities require you to provide sensitive personal information such as your name, account numbers, addresses, email addresses, passwords, and location information. Sharing this personal information online presents a huge opportunity for cybercriminals to steal your information to commit crimes such as credit card fraud, identity theft, and harassment.

DID YOU KNOW?

- 92 percent of Americans worry about their online privacy.[1]
- Almost half of Americans (45 percent) are more worried about their online privacy now than they were one year ago.[2]
- 74 percent of Americans have limited their online activity in the last year due to privacy concerns.[3]
- 91 percent of American adults say that consumers have lost control over how personal information is collected and used by companies.[4]
- 57 percent of Americans have refused to provide information about themselves that wasn't relevant to a transaction online.[5]

SIMPLE TIPS

- **Use strong passwords.** Create a password with eight characters or more along with a combination of upper and lowercase letters, numbers, and symbols. Change passwords regularly. Do not include your name, names of your kids or pets, or other personal information about yourself in your password. Often, this information is easy to find on social media, so it's easy for hackers to determine your passwords with these words.
- **Use stronger authentication.** Always opt to enable stronger authentication when available, especially for accounts with sensitive information including your email or bank accounts. A stronger authentication helps verify a user has authorized access to an online account. For example, it could be a one-time PIN texted to a mobile device, providing an added layer of security beyond the password and username. Visit www.lockdownyourlogin.com for more information on stronger authentication.
- **Limit the amount of personal information you share online.** Don't overshare on social networking websites. Keep Social Security numbers, account numbers, and

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[1] National Cyber Security Alliance, "U.S. Consumer Privacy Index 2016", January 2016

[2] Ibid

[3] Ibid

[4] Pew Research Center, "American Attitudes About Privacy, Security, and Surveillance", May 2015 [5] Ibid

passwords private, as well as specific information about yourself, such as your full name, address, birthday, and even vacation plans.

- **Review privacy and security permissions.** Be sure to review and understand the privacy and security permissions for any websites or apps where you share your personal information. When using social media sites, you can often customize your privacy settings. Make your privacy settings strict so that only people you know or approve can view your information.
- **Install and update anti-virus software.** Make sure all of your computers and mobile devices are equipped with antivirus software, firewalls, email filters, and anti-spyware. This software should be updated regularly.
- **Think before you connect.** Before you connect to any public wireless hotspot – like on an airplane or in an airport, hotel, train or bus station, or café – be sure to confirm the name of the network and login procedures with appropriate staff to ensure that the network is legitimate. Cybercriminals can easily create a similarly named network hoping that users will overlook which network is the legitimate one. Most hotspots are not secure and do not encrypt the information you send over the Internet leaving it vulnerable to online criminals. Do not conduct sensitive activity, like online banking or shopping, over a public wireless network.

Stop.Think.Connect. is a national public awareness campaign aimed at empowering the American public to be safer and more secure online. The Campaign's main objective is to help you become more aware of growing cyber threats and arm you with the tools to protect yourself, your family and your community. For more information visit www.dhs.gov/stopthinkconnect.

Homeland Security

www.dhs.gov/stopthinkconnect

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