

IDENTITY THEFT AWARENESS

San Diego Police Department

What is Identity Theft?

- Financial Identity Theft
- Criminal Identity Theft
- Identity Cloning
- Business or Commercial Identity Theft

Identity Theft is a dual victim crime.

How do thieves get information?

- They steal wallets and purses containing your ID, credit and bank cards.
- They steal your mail, including your bank & credit card statements, pre-approved offers, & tax info.
- They complete a “change of address form” to divert your mail to another location.
- Dumpster Diving. They rummage through trash for personal data.
- They obtain your credit report by posing as a landlord or employer.

...continued.

- They find personal information in your home.
- They use personal information you share on the Internet.
- “**Phishing**” - They scam you, often through email, by posing as legitimate companies or government agencies you do business with.
- They get information from the workplace by stealing, bribing, and extorting.

What do thieves do with the info?

- They call your credit card issuer, pretending to be you, and change your mailing address.
- They open a new credit card account using your information.
- They establish utilities in your name.
- They open a bank account in your name and write bad checks.
- They counterfeit checks or debit cards in your name, and drain your bank account.
- They buy cars by taking out loans in your name.

Pair Plead Guilty in Elaborate Identity Theft Ring

North County Times-December 2005

SAN DIEGO - A man and a woman who gained access to the bank accounts of mostly wealthy people, stealing their identities and ruining their credit, pleaded guilty Friday to multiple identity theft and fraud charges.

Aviv Dotan, 32, pleaded guilty to eight felony charges and will be sentenced to four years in state prison.

What if you become a victim?

- Call one of the three major credit bureaus to place a fraud alert on your credit report. The two other bureaus will be automatically notified and all three will send you reports free of charge.
- Close any accounts that have been tampered with or opened fraudulently. (**Dispute, then Advise**)
- File a police report. Obtain a copy and keep it for your records.
- File a complaint with the FTC.
(www.consumer.gov/idtheft)

Prevention

- Order your credit reports (3) once a year.
 - ◆ annualcreditreport.com
- Place passwords on your credit card, bank and phone accounts.
- Secure personal information in your home.
- Guard your personal information. Don't give out your personal information unless you initiated the contact, and you know who you are dealing with.
- Guard your mail & trash. Deposit mail at the post office. Get a Shredder.

...Prevention

- Be suspicious of telephone solicitors
 - ◆ www.donotcall.gov
- Pay attention to your billing statements and cycles.
- Be wary of promotional scams.
- OPT OUT of preapproved credit card offers (Have to give SSN) (888) 5OPT OUT or 888-567-8688.
- Use firewalls on your computer and don't download files sent by strangers.

What is being done?

- New Identity Theft laws.
- Resources at all levels of government have been established to assist victims.
- **Law Enforcement** –
 - SDPD formed an ID Theft Unit in 2003
 - FCU, RFTF, CATCH
 - USSS, USPIS, IRS, etc.
- Businesses
- Media

QUESTIONS

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