

BEYOND THE BASICS

Loss prevention tips for all your home matters provided by: Huckaby & Associates

Did You Know?

According to the U.S. Federal Trade Commission, identity theft is the fastest growing crime in the United States. Once a victim of identity theft, you could spend an average of \$1,500 and 175 hours to get your life back in order. Though that statistic may be alarming, you can stay one step ahead of identity thieves with the following safety precautions.

PROTECT YOUR IDENTITY

Mail Precautions

- Retrieve your mail every day from your personal mailbox.
- Drop outgoing mail, especially bills and other payments, into a secure, locked mailbox.
- Pay attention to when you should receive bills.
- When traveling, have your mail held at the post office or ask a neighbor to pick it up for you each day.
- If you move, notify the post office of your new address.
- Don't leave important mail in an unsecured location, even if it's a place you think things are secure.

Personal Items and Information Precautions

- Carry only what you absolutely need to, and keep an itemized list at home of what you carry.
- Provide your personal information to businesses on a "need to know" basis only.
- Ask your financial institution to omit your Social Security Number and driver's license number from your checks.
- Write "see ID" on the backs of your credit cards instead of signing them.
- Use a shredder to destroy personal and financial documents that you do not want to keep.

Helpful Hints

Identity thieves will steal your wallet, purse or laptop, pick through your mail, dig through your garbage, hack into your computer or stage email and telephone scams to obtain your personal information. They'll stop at nothing to obtain as much personal and/or financial information about you as they can to take advantage of you for their own benefit. To thwart identity thieves, you must be diligent about protecting your personal property and information.

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