



top 10 important things to protect yourself against identity theft:

- 1** Keep your Social Security number, date of birth, driver's license, passwords, PINs and banking information confidential.
- 2** Never give out any personal or financial information over the phone unless you made the call and know who you're talking to.
- 3** Never respond to e-mails asking for personal or financial information, even if they look like they're from your bank, lender or college. Real companies will never ask you for this information by e-mail.
- 4** Don't leave your personal or financial information lying around in your dorm room or apartment.
- 5** Be careful about sharing personal information in chat rooms, blogs or discussion groups, including Facebook and MySpace.
- 6** Make sure Web sites are secure before providing your credit card number or other personal information. Look for sites that begin with "https" or display a small padlock icon  next to the address field or on the lower right (but outside the Web-page viewing area).
- 7** Keep your computer current with the latest software patches and updates to reduce its vulnerability to online hackers.
- 8** Get your free credit report at **www.annualcreditreport.com**. Check it at least once a year. Look for unfamiliar accounts and incorrect addresses—signs of identity theft.
- 9** Shred all documents with your Social Security number, bank account numbers and other personal information before tossing.
- 10** Throwing out your old cell phone or computer? Be sure to destroy any stored information about yourself first.



To learn more, go to
www.idtheftcenter.org
www.ftc.gov/idtheft