

From: UTech Security

RE: UTech Security Awareness Bulletin – **Tips to Prevent Identity Theft**

The time between Thanksgiving and Christmas is the biggest shopping season of the year. As we enter the holiday season, we would like to remind everyone to take additional precautions against identity theft.

Here are some tips for keeping your credit card, account, and identity secure during the holiday season:

During a transaction keep an eye on your credit card and get it back as quickly as possible. Double swiping of credit cards into a 2nd device that makes a copy is a prevalent way of stealing card info.

- **Using an ATM?** Cover the keypad while entering your pin.
- **Shopping online?**
 1. Stick to sites that have a trustworthy reputation.
 2. **Look for Safety Symbols** to assure only you and the merchant can view your payment data. Safety symbols include:
 - the padlock icon in your browser's status bar
 - "s" symbol after "http" in the URL
 - the words "Secure Sockets Layer (SSL)."
 3. Make sure that your computer has a firewall installed and run up-to-date anti-virus and anti-spyware software.
 4. Keep your computer current with the latest operating system and web browser updates and patches.
 5. Create strong passwords for sites.
- Never respond to suspicious emails or click on links inside suspicious messages. If an offer sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- Do not reply to an email, text, or pop-up that asks for personal or financial information.
- Never email your credit card number to anyone.
- **Report lost or stolen credit cards immediately.** Many companies have toll-free numbers and 24-hour service to deal with such emergencies. Sign the new or replacement card as soon as you receive it.
- Verify a source before sharing information. Do not give out personal information on the phone, through the mail, or on the Internet unless you have initiated the contact and are sure you know with whom you are dealing.