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State of Connecticut



Connecticut State Police Colchester Resident Troopers' Office



Colchester Police

PRESS RELEASE Identity theft, credit fraud warning/tips

The Colchester Police have seen a recent increase in the volume of credit/debit card fraud and identity theft cases over the past weeks. With the upcoming holiday season, residents are encouraged to take the following steps to protect themselves from identity theft and credit fraud:

- Report lost/stolen cards immediately.
- Keep your personal information in a secure place.
- Never give out personal information over the phone, through the mail or over the internet unless you know/trust the business you are dealing with.
- Do not put personal information such as social security numbers or birth dates on checks
- Do not use obvious passwords/PINs such as birthdates, last four digits of SS#, etc.
- Never click on links in unsolicited emails, use computer firewalls and anti-spyware/anti-virus software.
- Guard your mail against theft, remove delivered mail from your mailbox promptly.
- Shred sensitive paperwork containing personal information on it.
- Monitor financial accounts and billing statements for unexplained charges or fraud.

If you suspect that you are the victim of identity theft or credit fraud, take the following steps immediately:

- Contact your creditors or bank immediately.
- Change PIN numbers and passwords immediately.
- Contact a credit bureau to place a "Fraud Alert" on your credit reports (Equifax, Experian and TransUnion are the three main credit bureaus, a call to one is sufficient.
- Contact your local police (Colchester Police 860-537-7270).

For additional information regarding identity theft and credit fraud, the following web sites have links to prevention and mitigation resources:

FTC web site: www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/microsites/idtheft/

CT State Police web site: www.ct.gov/despp

You are the best defense against identity theft, protect your personal information and monitor your credit/debit statements regularly.

Thank you,
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Colchester Resident State Police Sergeant

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