

Avoiding Identity Theft-Individuals

1. The IRS never initiates correspondence via email.
Do not click on any links, open or respond to any email that claims to be from the IRS,
2. Install and maintain a powerful anti-virus and firewall software system,
3. Review your credit report annually and block it from new credit requests if acceptable. It is available annually for free at www.annualcreditreport.com or 877-322-8228
4. Do not give anyone your social security number under almost any circumstances,
5. Destroy (shred) any old checks reflecting your social security number,
6. Buy and use a quality home shredder to shred all personally identifiable documents at all times,
7. Establish an annual policy as follows: photocopy all credit cards front and back and place dated copies in a safe or lockbox, establish all website logins and save in a secure manner; change all passwords every year over the holidays and record in a secure manner,
8. Secure all electronic files and paper files from intruders, **children** and outsiders,
9. Carefully guard against filling out any online forms and do not open accounts with anyone requiring social security numbers online,
10. File returns as soon as possible for decedents, young children and other highly subject taxpayers.