

## Identity Theft & Fraud Handout:

### What Can You Do to Protect Yourself?

#### Keep your personal information secure offline:

- Lock financial documents in a safe place at home.
- Limit what you carry. Only take ID and debit and credit cards that you will need. Leave your Social Security cards at home.
- Before you share information, ask about why they need it and how they will safeguard it.
- Shred paperwork that links to any of your accounts.

#### Secure your personal information online:

- Be alert to impersonators.
- Safely dispose of personal information. Use a wipe utility program to overwrite a computer's hard drive and learn how you can safely remove information from a cell phone before disposing.
- Look for the lock sign when browsing the internet. This lets you know that site is secure to transmit your personal information.
- Keep passwords strong and private. Trick: Think of a special phrase to you and use the first letter of each letter to create a password. Or, think of significant word to you and spell it in all symbols.

#### Keep Devices secure:

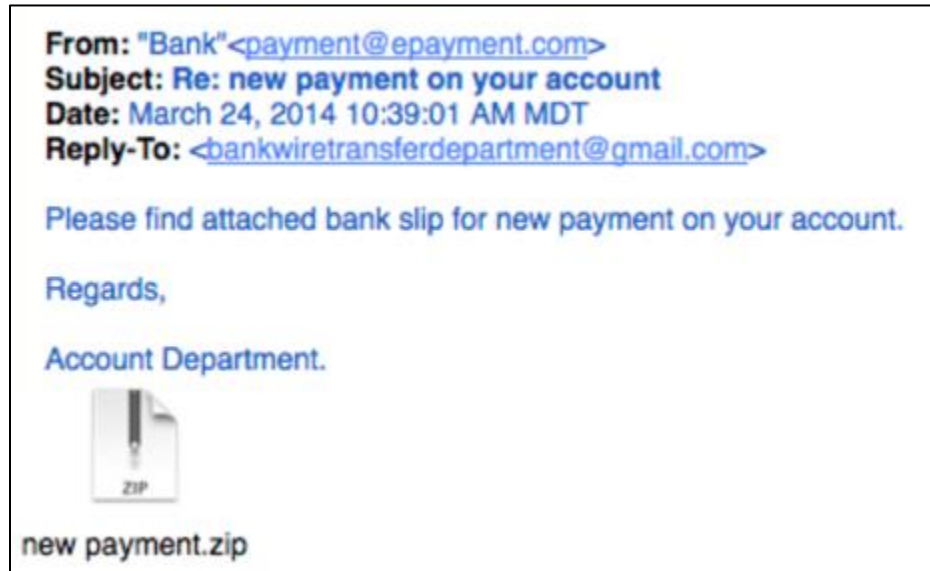
- Use security software.
- Avoid phishing emails. Don't open files, click on links, or download anything sent by strangers.
- Be wise about wifi. Be wary of a public wireless network.
- Lock your laptop. In case it gets stolen, it's harder for a thief to get at your personal information.
- Read privacy policies.
- Never give out passcodes to friends, significant others, etc.
- The more digits in passcodes, the better. Consider changing your iPhone passcode from 4 digits to 6.

#### Resources

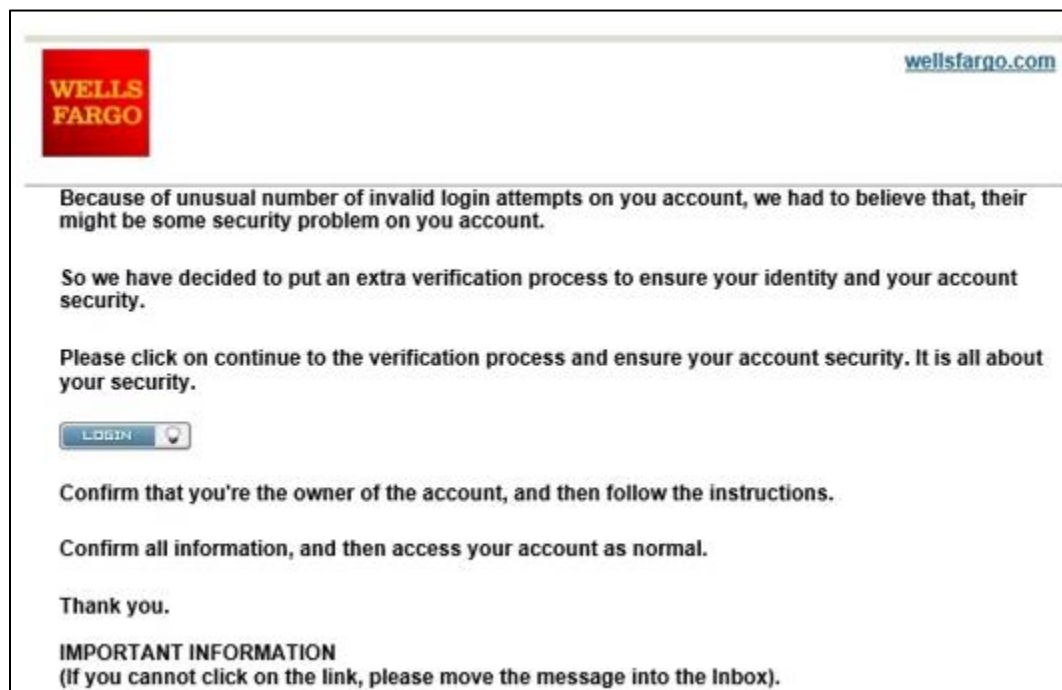
<p>Before it happens...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LastPass or other apps to manage your passwords</li> <li>• Consumer.ftc.gov</li> </ul>	<p>If it's already happened...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identitytheft.gov</li> <li>• Irs.gov</li> <li>• Dps.mn.gov</li> <li>• Credit reporting agencies</li> </ul>
---	--

What is wrong with these emails? Pair up and discuss.

Email 1:



Email 2:



---

# IDENTITY THEFT & FRAUD

A Segment of BestPrep's Financial Matters Series

# Sound Byte of Fake IRS Call

- Fake IRS scam call – YouTube

# WHAT IS IDENTITY THEFT?

## Part 1

# Definition

The fraudulent acquisition and use of a person's private identifying information, usually for financial gain.

**IDENTITY THEFT**

Someone uses your personal information to

- Open accounts
- File taxes
- Buy things



# Examples and Impact

## Examples of Misuse

- Open Credit Cards
- Open Utility Accounts
- Apply for a Tax Refund
- Get a Loan
- Apply for Employment
- Get Medical Care



## Impact on Victims

- denial of credit/loans
- denial of public benefits
- denial of medical care
- harassment by debt collectors
- lawsuits
- stress/anxiety
- embarrassment
- time/expenses spent



# Scam Email Examples



Because of unusual number of  
might be some security problem

So we have decided to put an  
security.

Please click on continue to the  
your security.

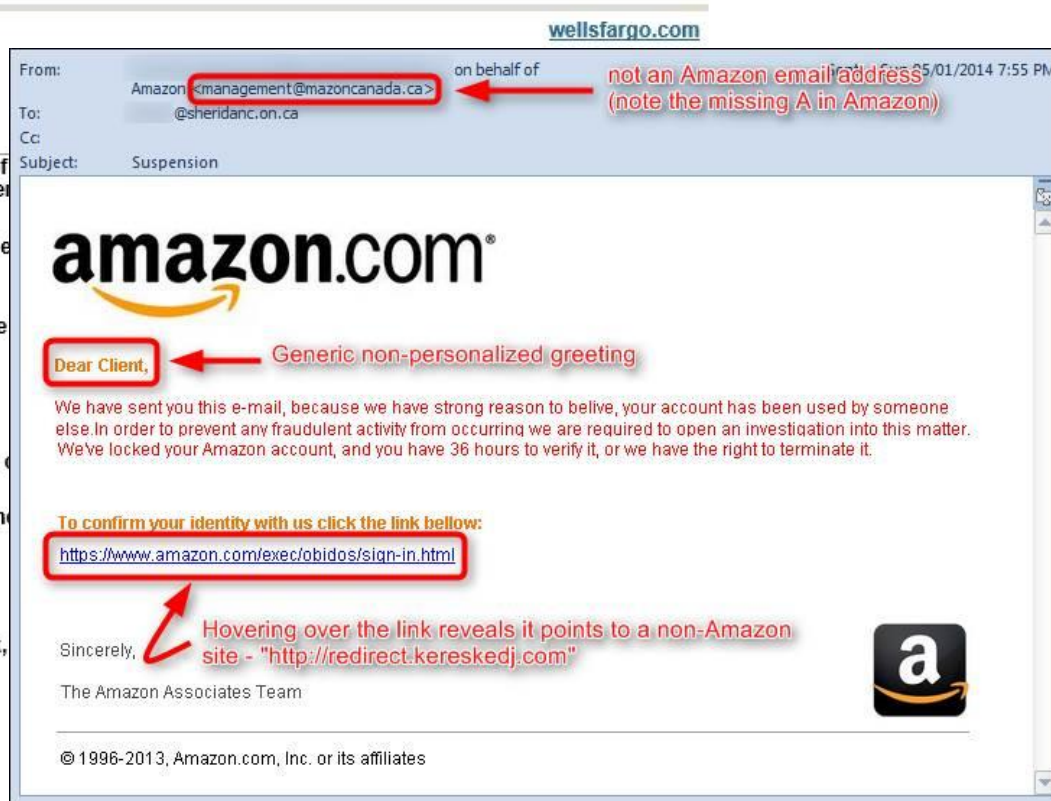
LOGIN

Confirm that you're the owner of

Confirm all information, and then

Thank you.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION  
(If you cannot click on the link,



new payment.zip

# SOCIAL MEDIA

With the rise of social media, beware of scams and payments that could happen through various platforms:

- Paying/getting paid for “likes”
- Get rich quick schemes



Always vet out any proposition you get from social media. A reputable source will have no problem giving more information!


# Personally Identifiable Information

- The information that can personally identify who you are may be used to open an account in your name:
- Social Security Number
- Address
- Personal history



# Information About You

Type of Information Institutions Have About You	Protected or Not under Federal Privacy Laws
Publicly Available Information	Not Protected
Personally Identifiable Financial Information	Protected
Nonpublic Personal Information	Protected



**Protected:** Institutions prohibited from sharing this information without your consent

# HOW DOES IT IMPACT YOU?

## Part 2

# Its impact

According to Equifax, there were more than **16.7 million victims of fraud in 2018.**

A survey done of identity theft victims revealed:



- 69% felt fear for personal financial security
- 50% said they had feelings of powerlessness or helplessness
- 29% said they felt shame or embarrassment

# Financial effects of identity theft

- Things you must deal with as soon as possible after the crime:
- Cleaning up and closing compromised bank accounts
- Opening new accounts/Changing passwords
- Restoring good credit is a marathon, not a race!
- Proving yourself to the bank/other institutions can be time consuming

# Financial effects of identity theft

- The financial hardships caused by identity theft can last months or years after the personal information has been exposed.
- Through account takeover, identity thieves can also take over investment and other financial accounts, which could impact:
  - Your savings
  - Your mortgage
  - Your education



# Hear from victims of identity theft



## IDENTITY THEFT STORIES

- Video Credit: BuzzFeed

# Psychological effects of identity theft

- **Feeling vulnerable:** Identity theft can be a faceless crime, so can feel hard to regain control after you are a victim.
- **Mistrust:** Victims find it hard to trust people after identity theft has happened because often times they don't know how the information was obtained by the thieves.
- **Financial Stress:** from filing police reports to re-establishing credit and cleaning up issues with banks.
- **Self-Blame:** Victims feel as though it was their fault because they were not careful, which is not true!



# According to the Federal Trade Commission

CONSUMER  
SENTINEL  
NETWORK  
DATA BOOK 2018

SNAPSHOT

3  
MILLION  
REPORTS

## TOP THREE CATEGORIES

1. Imposter scams
2. Debt collection
3. Identity theft

1.4 million fraud reports

25% reported  
a loss

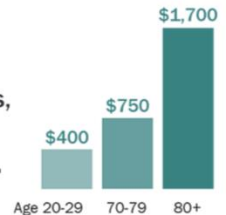
\$1.48 billion  
total fraud losses

\$375  
median loss

Younger people  
reported losing  
money to fraud  
more often than  
older people.



But when people  
aged 70+ had a loss,  
the median loss  
was much higher.



## Imposter Scams



NEARLY  
1 IN 5  
PEOPLE  
LOST MONEY

\$488 million  
reported lost

\$500 median loss

## Identity Theft

24% ↑  
Credit card  
new account  
fraud

38% ↓  
Tax fraud

FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION • ftc.gov/data

# Free Help at IdentityTheft.gov

Get a personal recovery plan that walks you through each step.

Create an **identity theft affidavit** that you can review and update at any time.

Get **customized pre-filled letters** to send to credit bureaus, businesses, and debt collectors.

Return anytime to **update your plan** and **track your progress**.

Get advice about what to do if you're affected by **specific data breaches**.



Tell us what happened.



Get a recovery plan.



Put your plan into action.

# WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PROTECT YOURSELF?

Part 3



# Keep your personal information secure offline:



**LOCK FINANCIAL  
DOCUMENTS IN A  
SAFE PLACE**



**LIMIT WHAT YOU  
CARRY**



**THINK BEFORE  
YOU SHARE  
INFORMATION**



**SHRED  
IMPORTANT  
PAPERWORK**



# Secure your personal information online:



**BE ALERT TO  
IMPERSONATORS**



**SAFELY DISPOSE  
OF PERSONAL  
INFORMATION**



**LOOK FOR THE  
LOCK SIGN WHEN  
BROWSING THE  
INTERNET**



**KEEP  
PASSWORDS  
STRONG AND  
PRIVATE**



# Keep Devices secure:



**USE SECURITY  
SOFTWARE**



**AVOID PHISHING  
EMAILS**



**BE WISE ABOUT  
WIFI**



**LOCK YOUR LAPTOP**



**READ PRIVACY  
POLICIES**



**NEVER GIVE OUT  
PASSCODES TO  
FRIENDS,  
SIGNIFICANT  
OTHERS, ETC.**

# Keep information secure! (handout)

- Secure personal information offline
- Secure personal information online
- Keep devices secure

