



MARATHON COUNTY EMPLOYEES CREDIT UNION

www.mcecu.org

March 2006



Avoiding Identity Theft

Steps You Can Take to Reduce Your Risk

Your identity is one of your most valuable assets. Protect yourself by knowing where your identity is exposed and how to defend it against identity thieves. A small effort on your part to change key habits and practices could keep you from becoming a victim.

What identity thieves want most

Anything you can do to keep criminals away from your personal data helps to reduce your risk of identity theft. Here's what identity thieves covet most:

- Your name address and phone
- Your date of birth
- Your social security number
- Your bank account information
- Your mother's maiden name

Your SSN

Your Social Security number is the key to cloning your identity. Therefore:

- Do not carry your Social Security card in your wallet. Avoid carrying cards that display your SSN — notably health insurance cards, unless needed to receive care.
- Never give your SSN, credit card number, or other personal data by phone unless you have an existing relationship with the business or agency AND you initiated the call using a verified phone number. Always verify the other party's authenticity. 5672
- Avoid including your SSN on job applications. Provide it only when absolutely necessary — for tax, employment, and student records, stock and property transactions, and so on.
- If a government agency requests your SSN, look for an accompanying Privacy Act notice indicating whether an SSN is required, how it will be used, and what happens if you don't provide it. 2105

Annual Meeting

Our **41st Annual Meeting** will be held on Tuesday, April 25th at the VFW Club. Please mark this date on your calendar to come help us celebrate 41 years of service to our members. Invitations will go out in April. 1010



Construction Update

Thomas St. is under construction. The city is redoing the bridges to our East and West. On the bridge west of us only one lane of traffic will be open and controlled by stop lights. This is scheduled to go on until December.

As a way to access us if you do not want to fight traffic during the construction, we joined an alliance so that you can use other credit union's ATMs for **free**.

The area ATMs that will be free are:

Tower Credit Union on Bridge St
 Tower Credit Union on Stone Ridge Dr. (Off of X) in Weston
 Tower Credit Union: in the gas station at 308 W Stewart Ave
 CoVantage Credit Union by East bay at 110 S 1st Av
 CoVantage Credit Union by Brig's at 3807 Schofield Av
 Clover belt Credit Union at 110 McEnroe St
 Clover belt Credit Union by Hampton Inn at 625 S 24th Ave
 Clover belt Credit Union by the Palm's Supper Club

Other ways to utilize us without visiting are:

Mail: Inner Office or US Postal Service
 MARS: Our 24 hour teller at 1 877 678-1016
 Phone: 715 261-7680
 Debit Card: Use at merchants or ATMs
 Checks: Write checks anywhere
 Online: www.mcecu.org "CU ONLINE"
 Email: cuteller@mail.co.marathon.wi.us
 Coworker: On payday have one person from your office be designated to fight the traffic and visit us to do the entire Departments banking. (With permission we will do this and send the transactions back in sealed envelopes)

To find the nearest free ATM go to: www.atmalliacneone.org

Odds and Ends

TURBO TAX is available on our web site to prepare your taxes. Visit it at www.mcecu.org.

Check out our great **rates on IRA's** online at www.mcecu.org. Our IRA's have **no fees**.

There are seven **hidden account numbers** in this newsletter. If your number is one of them, call 261-7680 to claim your \$10.00 prize. Good luck! 6932

Does Your Child Know How To Manage Money?

According to the most recent survey sponsored by the Jumpstart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy, today's high school seniors still lack basic money management skills. 2795

The Coalition's nationwide survey measures 12th graders' knowledge of personal finance. The written exam tests for knowledge of such topics as paying taxes, using a credit card, and saving for retirement. In the latest survey available, 65% of the surveyed students failed the exam, with only 6% scoring a C or better.

That's why no matter how old your children are now it's essential to help them learn how to manage money wisely. Here are some suggestions based on your child's age:

Ages 5 to 10

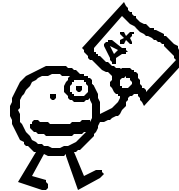
- Begin giving your children a weekly allowance to offer hands-on money management experience. An allowance makes it easier to learn how to save because children know they'll get a set amount of money on a regular basis.
- Let your children save for and buy something they really want. Savings habits are only reinforced with rewards, so saving must be tied to spending.
- Set up three coin banks labeled Save, Spend, and Share. Have children contribute a portion of their allowance and cash gifts to each. This will teach them how to save regularly, spend wisely, and give to others. When the save coin bank builds up take children to open their first credit union savings account. 4669
- Provide opportunities to earn extra money by doing additional household jobs -- those above their regular responsibilities.

Ages 11 to 14

- Include children on shopping trips to help teach them what things cost and smart-shopping techniques. Let them help compare product qualities, prices, return policies, and warranties.
- Encourage odd jobs such as baby-sitting, yard work, or pet care. Encourage children to use their own money to buy beyond-the-basics clothing and accessories.
- Direct your child to the American Savings Education Council (ASEC) online Savings Calculator (www.asec.org). The ASEC is a nonprofit national coalition of public and private institutions that provide personal finance education. Their calculator will help your child calculate how much he or she needs to save every month to reach his or her savings goal.

Ages 15 to 18

- Begin to discuss saving plans for upcoming goals, such as college and cars.
- Consider giving teens a seasonal clothing allowance, beyond their regular allowance. After setting guidelines and limits let them make their own choices.
- Consider helping financially responsible teens get their own share draft/checking account. Also consider letting financially responsible older teens use your credit or debit card or get their own with your cosignature. 3425



GET YOUR FREE CREDIT REPORT

You can get a free report from each of the three nationwide consumer reporting agencies every 12 months.

Utilize these centralized sources for you to get your report:

- Online: www.annualcreditreport.com
- Phone: 877 322-8228
- Mail: Annual Credit Report Request Service
PO Box 105281
Atlanta, GA 30348-5281

We have the forms in the office.

I encourage all of you to get an annual copy of your credit report and to verify that everything on it is correct. This is one method of finding out if you are a victim of identity theft. If you get your free report and have questions, stop down and we can help you with understanding how to read your reports.

What's Up With.....Lou Ann

I have been employed with the Credit Union since May of 1989.

My husband Glenn of 31 years works as a Semi-driver for USF Holland.

We have been blessed with two wonderful daughters. Tanya is married and is a Nanny and lives in Schofield. Tara is an Esthetician/Stylist and lives in Sun Prairie.

And Life is great!