



Consumer Federation of America

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OVER 13 MILLION AMERICANS WERE VICTIMS OF ID THEFT-RELATED FRAUD IN 2013

Consumer Federation of America Releases New Video and Tips to Help Consumers Protect Themselves and Others

Washington D.C. – Today the Consumer Federation of America (CFA) is releasing the seven best ways that consumers can protect themselves and the people they care about from identity theft and the damage it can cause. Never before has this information been more important as the results of the latest survey conducted by Javelin Strategy and Research suggests. The report revealed that an estimated 13.1 million Americans were victims of identity theft-related fraud in 2013, an increase of more than 500,000 people from the previous year. Of the many kinds of identity fraud, the most prevalent problem was account takeover, where criminals assume control over victims' financial or other types of accounts for their own uses.

While consumers can't prevent the data breaches at retail stores that have been in the news lately, CFA says that they can thwart many other types of identity theft and fraud by taking simple steps to secure their personal information. To celebrate National Consumer Protection Week, CFA is releasing a humorous new video and tips, "[Get Smart: Protect Yourself, Your Friends and Your Family from ID Theft and Fraud](#)." This project was undertaken with support from LifeLock, Inc., a provider of identity theft protection services for consumers.

"With the amount of personal information that we have on our computers, laptops, tablets and smartphones, these devices are tempting targets for identity thieves," said Susan Grant, CFA Director of Consumer Protection. "It's crucial to understand the harm that identity theft can cause and take basic precautions, such as locking your accounts with strong passwords and not doing financial transactions using unsecure public Wi-Fi networks."

"Our world is rapidly changing and public education on the causes and mitigation of identity theft-related fraud is a critical issue. LifeLock is proud to partner with the Consumer Federation of America to ensure that consumers better understand the consequences of this increasing problem, as well as ways to protect themselves from such identity risk in the future," said Clarissa Cerda, Executive Vice President and Chief Legal Officer of LifeLock, Inc.

Identity thieves can use stolen personal information to wipe out people's bank accounts, open credit accounts in their names or take over existing accounts, endanger their health by obtaining medical services using their identities, obtain tax refunds and other government benefits, and even get law-abiding people into trouble with the law. Identity thieves can also impersonate people to steal money or personal information from their friends and relatives. "Anyone can be an identity theft victim, but we're especially concerned about younger people who spend so much of their time online and may not be aware of the dangers to themselves and others," said Ms. Grant. "Even if it's just someone hacking into your social networking account to post embarrassing photos or malicious messages and make it look like you did it, it could cause you a world of pain."

The new "Get Smart" [video](#) and [tips](#), and other CFA consumer education materials on Identity theft, are on www.consumerfed.org/idtheft. They can also be found, along with other information about identity theft from CFA and other sources, on CFA's www.IDTheftInfo.org website and on the official National Consumer Protection Week website, www.ncpw.gov.

CFA is a non-profit association of nearly 300 consumer groups that was established in 1968 to advance the consumer interest through research, advocacy, and education.