

# Identity Theft Checklist

By John F. Smith

- ☐ Wallet
  - ☐ Remove any cards or documents not needed on a regular basis.
  - ☐ Don't keep a birth certificate in your wallet.
  - ☐ Only carry your passport when necessary.
  - ☐ If your wallet is lost or stolen, immediately contact your credit card companies and financial institutions.
- ☐ Mailbox
  - ☐ Install a locked mailbox or a mail slot that allows letters to drop inside your home.
  - ☐ When you're away, ask a neighbour to promptly pick up your mail.
  - ☐ Take note of when credit card and utility bills are supposed to arrive.
  - ☐ Reduce the number of sensitive documents mailed to your home by switching to secure online banking.
  - ☐ Destroy any unwanted pre-approved credit card applications that arrive in the mail.
  - ☐ Instruct your bank not to mail you unsolicited convenience cheques.
- ☐ Computer
  - ☐ Use intricate passwords.
  - ☐ Avoid using an automatic login feature.
  - ☐ Never leave your laptop in the car or anywhere else it could easily be stolen.
  - ☐ Use digital signatures, data encryption, and anonymizing services.
  - ☐ Use a personal firewall.
  - ☐ Install virus protection software.
  - ☐ Disable file-sharing software to block unauthorized access to information in your computer.
  - ☐ When shopping or banking online, only send personal or financial information after ensuring there is a secure transaction system.
  - ☐ Make online purchases from reputable firms.
  - ☐ Sign out of a web site and clear your Internet file after online banking.
  - ☐ Make sure your wireless Internet is protected.
  - ☐ Disconnect or disable your Wi-Fi equipment when not in use.

- ☐ Do not reply to or click on links in any e-mail asking for your personal information.
- ☐ Ensure personal information is deleted before selling a computer.
- ☐ Do not engage by replying to bogus e-mails.
- ☐ Credit Cards
  - ☐ Don't give credit card numbers on the telephone unless you are sure who you are speaking with.
  - ☐ Monitor bills and credit card activity carefully each month.
  - ☐ Keep a list of all credit card numbers and expiry dates in a safe place
  - ☐ Cut up any credit or debit cards that are expired or that you don't use.