



The Security Minute

Take a second to be secure.

A communication of the Longwood University Information Security Office

Read *The Security Minute* Online: www.longwood.edu/infosec

Protect Your SSN to Prevent Identity Theft

Your social security number is one of the most important pieces of information to protect in order to prevent identity theft.

Never use your social security number as part of a user ID or password.

The fewer places your social security number is recorded, the fewer opportunities there are for your number to be compromised. Unfortunately the reality of the online world is that your account may be hacked or a system may be breached. If that happens and your social security number is your password not only has all of your account information been accessed, your social security number has been obtained as well.

Recognize phishing messages and delete them.

Delete any message asking you to reply with your social security number or to click a link to update your personal information, including your social security number. Responsible organizations, including government agencies, are aware of the risks of phishing and as a result they don't initiate communication through e-mail.

Give out your social security number only when necessary.

Your social security is needed for tax, wage and credit check purposes; however, companies have often in the past collected social security numbers when they were not required. The Social Security Administration recommends that you ask the following when someone asks you for your social security number:

- Why is my social security number needed?
- How will my social security number be used?
- What happens if I refuse to provide my social security number?
- What law requires me to give you my social security number?

July 2009



Bright Idea!

Never share your password with anyone.

As You Travel: Tips for Reducing the Risk of Laptop Theft



- Keep your laptop with you (not in your car or hotel room if possible).
- Keep your eye on your laptop while going through security checkpoints.
- Report lost or stolen laptops immediately. If your university laptop is lost or stolen while you are away contact User Support Services (during normal business hours) or Campus Police (at night and on weekends).



The Security Minute is a monthly publication aimed at raising awareness of information security related issues and concerns. If you have any questions regarding the newsletter, please contact Melissa Short at 434-395-2034 or shortmj@longwood.edu.