

Protecting Your Finances

Five Tips To Help You Stay Fraud-Free

(NAPSA)—Give a thief your wallet and he'll steal for a day. Give him your personal information and he'll steal for life. Nobody wants to become the victim of fraud. Here are Radialpoint's five tips to stay protected:

1. Stay on top of your financial activities. A lot can happen when you're not paying attention. Check your bank statements often and carefully, and don't wait until the end of the month to review them. Make sure to report anything suspicious immediately.

2. If a friend sends you an IM (instant message) with a link requesting you to download a file from an unknown source, do not download the file. What sounds like a harmless invitation to view a funny photo on the Web may actually be a computer virus.

3. You wouldn't leave your house unlocked or your keys in your car, so why would you leave your PC unprotected? Make sure your firewall and anti-virus software are updated regularly. So you can stay protected against new forms of threats, such as viruses and spyware, that crop up daily, use a service such as Verizon Security Advisor, available to all Internet users via www.verizon.net/securityadvisor.

4. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Be wary of



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unsolicited callers promising dream vacations in return for a seemingly small fee. Never make arrangements to send any money over the phone.

5. Be on the lookout for e-mails that begin with phrases such as "please verify your account" or "dear valued customer" or "your account will be closed in 48 hours if you do not..." The truth is that a bank would never request your information or password via e-mail.

Don't deceive yourself into thinking you needn't worry about fraud. Staying alert can help to keep you fraud-free.