

GUARD AGAINST



Identity theft has been weighing heavily on the minds of state employees and their families this summer.

Gov. Ted Strickland disclosed to the media last month the recent theft of a computer back-up device containing the names and Social Security numbers of more than 64,000 state employees. Other theft reports of state-owned computers and equipment followed.

The Ohio Attorney General's Office says that a security breach - especially involving encoded data - does not necessarily mean that a person's identity has been stolen, but it does increase the potential that the information could be misused.

While the likelihood that state security breaches would result in misuse has been downplayed by some, experts say you can't be too careful - especially since the data on the now infamous stolen state tape was not encrypted.

Enrollment required

Most state employees are not just thinking about the issue, however. Responding to Strickland's offer for a free, one-year identity protection service, thousands have already taken action by enrolling in the Debix Identity Protection Network. (see below).

Debix contacts the three national credit reporting companies and provides other identity protection features for state employees who enroll. After one year, participants will be reminded of

their subscription expiration and will be offered re-enrollment options at the state employees' expense.



Tom Stephens, a Commerce Chap, 2501 member, and his son Michael enjoy a carefree night at a little league baseball game.

Stephens signed up for Debix because he said, "It's free and easy. Just take the time to sign up and protect yourself and your family."

Beware of fraud attempts

So you've already enrolled in Debix, but what else can you do?

For starters, encourage your spouse and adult children or

Credit reports

To request free credit reports, go to www.annualcreditreport.com or call 877-322-8228.

For consumer and general credit reporting information, go to www.ftc.gov/credit.

Fraud alert

EQUIFAX
P.O. Box 740241
Atlanta, GA 30374-0241
800-685-1111
www.equifax.com

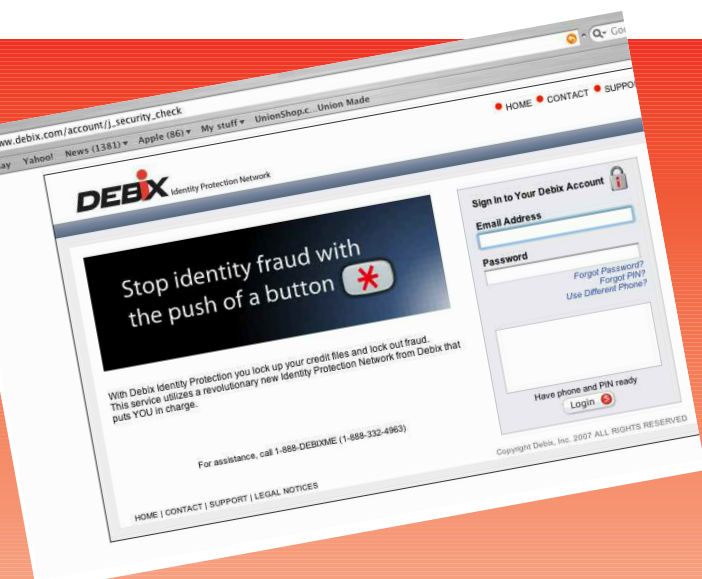
EXPERIAN
P.O. Box 9701
Allen, TX 75013
888-397-3742
www.experian.com

TRANS UNION
Consumer Disclosure Center
P.O. Box 2000
Chester, PA 19022
(877) 322-8228
www.transunion.com

elderly parents living in your home to obtain copies of their credit reports to monitor their information (see above).

Law enforcement officials and consumer groups both strongly urge consumers to never respond to an email or telephone call when personal or financial information is requested unless contacting them first. This warning also applies to messages that appear to have been sent by a business or institution that consumers do business with.

Go to www.ocsea.org/IDprotect for a listing of additional government and consumer protection resources.



Get free identity protection, theft insurance

State employees may enroll with Debix by phone, website or U.S. mail. Enrollment is easy and free for the first year.

WEBSITE:
DEBIX.com/StateofOhio

PHONE:
1-888-DebixMe (888-332-4963)

EMAIL:
Support@Debix.com
(Use "Ohio" as the subject line.)

Stewards' Top 10 Resources

If stewards had to rely on paper alone, with the resources they use on a daily basis, they would have to carry around a stack of paper that would reach the ceiling!

But for some stewards, lugging around big binders or keeping lots of paper, just isn't practical. The convenience of accessing a variety of resources on the OCSEA website is an important tool given the many facets of the work stewards do.

Toolbox Resources - Download grievance forms, the arbitration index, contract links, the constitution and by-laws, fact sheets, and more. Also, the toolbox offers a special stewardship section which includes the union's steward-related policies, training links, handbooks and other resources. The Stewards Incentive Program details are also available.

Online registration - Sign up for education courses and union conferences.

Leadership Academy - Participate in AFSCME's free Web Tracks designed for leaders on a various topics.

Email - Keep connected via the E-News Digest and the bi-weekly *New Directions* emails.

Action Alerts - Respond to Take Action alerts by sending email messages to legislators on issues that impact public employee union members and the services they deliver in Ohio.

Blog - New in 2007, the OCSEA Union Blog was created to share union-related news, ideas and opinions. It offers another way for union stewards to keep current with events and happenings that impact the labor movement and state government.

Forums - The discussion forums are still a convenient way for union stewards to share information and ask for advice. Popular topics include Corrections, Stewards and OCSEA General.

Calendar - Subordinate body meetings, steward trainings and union conferences are listed. Online registration is available for most events. Submit local meeting information for the website, or use the online meeting notice request system to promote meetings and elections.

Organizing - Use the "discount and programs" membership section to help new members learn more about their membership-only benefits like OCSEA Extras, union scholarships and AFSCME Advantage. Or print off information to show fee payers what they're missing out on.

Member Benefit Websites - Union stewards often field questions about member benefits. Keep up on what's happening with the Union Education Trust and the Union Benefits Trust by clicking on their respective buttons located on the OCSEA.org home page.

Browse www.ocsea.org to learn more.

General Questions?

Check with your agency's human resources office or contact a customer service representative at the State of Ohio's ID Protection Call Center: PHONE: 800-267-4474 and 877-742-5622 WEBSITE: www.ohio.gov/IDprotect

How to protect your children

The stolen information included data related to dependent children. Be aware that Debix does not work for children.

You can take action by contacting each of the three credit reporting agencies to request a credit report on the child.

You may be able to do this by calling the bureaus at the toll-free numbers (left). Follow the cues for "fraud" on the automated phone systems. Be prepared to provide your child's name, Social Security number and other requested information. The phone systems will probably give you a response of "no file found" or "information does not match." This is good news because it shows there is no reported credit activity involving the child's personal information.

Follow up by writing to the credit bureaus. Report the suspected identity theft and ask them to confirm in writing that they have no file on your child. Sample letters are available at www.ohio.gov/IDprotect



Stewards Academy, 2006