



NEWS FROM SCDCA

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
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1.800.922.1594 (toll free in SC)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Over Half a Million SC Consumers Affected by Security Breaches in 2013

Columbia, SC... In calendar year 2013, the South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs received a total of **41 security breach notices** affecting more than **540,000** South Carolina consumers. From 2008 through 2013, SCDCA received **126 breach notices** affecting more than **7.3 million** South Carolina consumers.

With these figures in mind, SCDCA encourages consumers to take the steps below to protect against identity theft:

- ***Beware of “Phishing”***- Never release personal information to a cold caller or someone you don't know, especially when the request is made through e-mail or text.
- ***Safeguard Your Personal Information*** - If someone does request personal identifying information, ask:
 - Why they need it? Is there another identifier that can be used?
 - Who will they share it with?
 - What policies do they have in place to protect it?
 - How long will they keep it?
 - How will they dispose of it?
- ***Check Your Credit Reports Annually***-. Consumers can dial 877-322-8228 or visit www.annualcreditreport.com to access their FREE annual credit reports.
- ***Monitor Financial and Benefits Statements***- Review them carefully and notify the financial institution/provider as soon as you spot an unauthorized or suspicious item.

For more information on protecting against Identity Theft visit our “Identity Theft Resources” webpage at www.consumer.sc.gov or contact SCDCA’s Identity Theft Unit at 800-922-1594.

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SCDCA aims to protect consumers from inequities in the marketplace through advocacy, complaint mediation, enforcement and education. To file a complaint or get information on consumer issues, visit www.consumer.sc.gov or call toll-free, 1.800.922.1594.

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