



NEWS FROM SCDCA

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

1.2 Billion Usernames & Passwords Stolen: What Should You Do?

Columbia, SC... The South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs (SCDCA) is urging consumers to remain vigilant in the wake of one of the largest security breaches in history. When in the wrong hands, a username and password combination can help a scammer strike it rich. Spear phishing, the practice of sending a consumer an e-mail that looks like it is from a person or business they have a relationship with, is a common scam attempt after security breaches like this. If a consumer receives an e-mail asking for personal or financial information:

- ***Be suspicious.*** Businesses and government agencies will not try to verify sensitive information via unsecure means like e-mail.
- ***Do not call a phone number contained in the e-mail.*** If you are concerned and want to call the company, call the number on your last statement, on the back of your credit card or from another known source.
- ***Don't click on links or attachments.*** Links and attachments can lead to malicious sites or even download viruses to a consumer's computer.
- ***Use anti-virus software.*** Make sure it is up to date and working properly.
- ***Track your finances.*** Consumers should also monitor personal and financial statements for signs of fraud or identity theft. It is important to review statements carefully, **as soon as they arrive.**

Though news reports have yet to release the names of any companies that are involved in this breach, consumers can still look for the following additional signs of compromise:

- Friends and family get emails or messages you didn't send;
- Your Sent messages folder has messages you didn't send, or has been emptied;
- Your social media accounts have posts you didn't make;
- You can't log into your email or social media account(s).

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Consumers who are victims of fraud or identity theft are encouraged to contact SCDCA's Identity Theft Unit toll-free at 800-922-1594. This new Unit can offer personalized guidance to consumers to resolve or mitigate identity theft issues. Consumers looking for more information on the Unit, or identity theft in general, should visit www.consumer.sc.gov.

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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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