

SmartGuard Newsletter

Identity theft is a crime

Don't let your name end up in a criminal database!

The flashing lights in your rear view mirror are your only warning. You're not speeding. Your license plate hasn't expired. Did someone die...hopefully not. The police are pulling you over and you don't know why. The officer tells you why you're being arrested and reads you your rights. But, you didn't commit that crime. The other you did. The one that stole your identity.

According to the US Department of Justice, 4% of identity theft victims become the subject of a criminal investigation. The thieves aren't just using your identity to obtain credit, buy a car, get a job or rent an apartment; they're assuming your identity and then committing serious, even violent crimes in your name.

For those who know what they're doing, stealing a consumer's identity is easy...get a copy of a credit card statement from a mail box, check the little "Change of Address" box to redirect future statements, build additional credit using the new name and address, and obtain a new drivers license using the assumed identity. Committing financial crimes in your name can be a devastatingly a costly issue, but when the criminal pulls out your drivers' license with his photo on it when arrested for a violent offense and then disappears while waiting for his court date the stakes clearly change.

Law enforcement agencies maintain criminal databases and if you, or the assumed you, are wanted for a crime committed in your name you can be arrested at any time...anywhere. Police may be on the lookout for your license plate number, employers may check these databases when doing a routine background check on you as a current employee or when they consider hiring you for a position. If you're a parent, child welfare agencies may get involved and you're name may even show up on a Wanted poster. If you're arrested, the clarification of your identification isn't likely to happen on the spot and the implications can be devastating.

The easiest way to avoid criminal activity being committed using your identity is to consistently monitor the use of your name and address. Creative thieves are always one step ahead of the authorities and are constantly developing new ways to obtain your personal information. If you can catch the unauthorized attempt to use your personal information before your identity is actually assumed, you'll avoid the paralyzing affect that criminal activity committed in your name can cause.

We alert you to changes in your personal information as soon as they appear, giving you the opportunity to take action before the use of your identity spirals out of control. A small bit of prevention can keep your name off of the law enforcement radar and help you avoid the paralyzing effects it can cause. The potential cost of someone assuming your identity isn't worth the risk.

Identity Theft Restoration

In the unfortunate event that you become a victim of an Identity Theft, We offer two ways to see you through the recovery process:

- For those that want assistance, we will completely manage the recovery process. The greatest advantage of allowing us to assume and organize the recovery process is the reduction of the time and hassle involved.
- For those that want more control over the recovery process, we provide a step by step instruction manual detailing the resolution process. The manual also includes guidance for avoiding future complications and a toll-free victim assistance number for access to trained identity theft recovery specialists. This service allows victims to correct and identify violations themselves without the assistance and expense of an attorney.

Related News

Hundreds of missing passport applications found at Los Angeles airport

Inspector general blasts VA for slow data breach disclosure, response

Simulated Internet attack shows holes in government's cybersecurity