

CHECKING ACCOUNT FRAUD

**Twelve Tips
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That Can
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Keep This
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Crime From
.....
Happening
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To You**

Checking account fraud is one of the fastest growing crimes in the nation, according to law enforcement officials. The Federal Reserve estimates that losses resulting from this crime will hit \$10 billion this year.

New technology is a prime reason for the rapid growth of this crime. Inexpensive computer programs, scanners and improved printers and copying technology make it easier than ever for thieves to set up a fraudulent check sting.

Your bank has initiated training programs and other safeguards to help prevent and detect check fraud. But as is often the case, one of the first lines of defense against fraud is you - the consumer.

A CHECK FRAUD CHECKLIST

1. Never respond to unsolicited requests for your checking account, social security or other financial information.

2. Safeguard checks at home and on your person; never leave them in your car or workplace.

3. Shred unused checks before disposal, even if they are from a closed account.

4. Destroy convenience checks, such as those that allow cash advances on credit cards, before discarding.

5. Never have your social security or drivers license number preprinted on your checks.

6. When mailing checks, use a heavy envelope or wrap checks in paper to conceal them from view.

7. Notify your bank and postal authorities if newly ordered checks or routine bank statements don't arrive in a timely manner.

8. Know how many checks you ordered; verify your order and the accuracy of the information on your checks.

9. Immediately notify your community bank and file a police report if personal checks, or any checks payable to you, are stolen and close compromised accounts.

10. Check your balance frequently and promptly review and reconcile checking account statements for accuracy and fraud.

11. Consider shopping elsewhere if the merchant requires your social security number to make a purchase.

12. If you live in a state that uses your social security number as your driver's license number, request an alternative random number.

Additional information about check fraud is available from the:

- National Check Fraud Center at www.ckfraud.org or 843-571-2143
- Office of the Comptroller of the Currency at www.occ.treas.gov

Embracing Technology, Preserving Trust



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