



The ONE SOURCE for all your credit reporting needs

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## OUR NEWSLETTERS

Please pass our newsletters to other people in your office. Our newsletters include articles explaining: how to get better credit reports, and the many services and products we offer. We also have stories on ID Theft, credit fraud, information on disputing incorrect data on credit reports, information on upcoming seminars and events. We also try to include articles on credit and collections that don't often appear in the local newspapers.

We have added a newsletter index. If you want to find an old article or look at a newsletter you missed, just go to our web page and click "ID Theft and Credit Info Links. Then click on "past newsletters." You will see the Index of Newsletters and our newsletters since Jan. 2000.

We surveyed the few remaining banks and credit unions in the Peoria area that don't use us and banks & credit unions in Ottawa, Bloomington/Normal, Decatur and Springfield that don't pull from us. We were very surprised to learn that **every one**, who responded, were pulling credit reports incorrectly. Each institution was pulling reports in a manner that damaged consumers' credit scores.

Because of that survey, we conducted several seminars, open to members and non-members, to explain credit scores. We have also written several articles in our newsletters explaining how to pull credit reports correctly.

## DISPUTING ACCOUNTS

As we have said, the FCRA requires resellers of credit reports to initiate the dispute process for the consumers who have had their reports pulled by our members. If you have pulled the report through our MCL you can help the consumer dispute tradelines by clicking on Request Supplement and marking the incorrect trade lines.

### DO NOT FAX US THE CREDIT REPORT!

*In most cases we already have the report.*

If you have pulled the report from Experian's eSolutions web page or from KCB Express Credit Searches web page, we also have access to the credit report. We can provide the consumer with a copy, if you do not wish to provide a copy.

If you have pulled the report through your

third party software, ie: Bradford Scott, Factual Date, or CSI, we don't have access to the report. If that is the case, we will ask you to fax us a copy. However, since it was pulled with the number we assigned you, we can still dispute it.

If you send the consumer to us, we can dispute the data for them, but that will not change your current report. We can change the merged and mortgage reports you pull, only, if you authorize us to investigate the incorrect information.

## FCRA REQUIREMENTS

The FCRA requires credit bureaus to be able to identify the person pulling each credit report. Each user in your organization must have their own User Name to sign in. If Experian were to audit your usage and found that you were in violation, every one in your company or organization could lose your ability to pull credit reports.

If you have any questions on signing up new users in our office, please call us today.

**MONEY  
SMART  
WEEK<sup>SM</sup>  
ILLINOIS  
APRIL 6 - 12 | 2008**

[www.moneysmartweek.org](http://www.moneysmartweek.org)

Money Smart Week is sponsored by the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago. It offers a week of classes and seminars on financial matters. Those sponsoring classes are banks, credit unions, counseling agencies, social service agencies, private businesses and one credit bureau: KCB Information Services.

We will have two classes in Champaign and Bloomington/Normal. We will also have classes in Pekin and Peoria.

The first class we are presenting is: CREDIT SCORES: THE SILENT KILLER. It will

include a history of Credit Bureau, explain what is in and isn't in credit reports and an explanation of credit scoring.

The second class will be: ID THEFT, PREVENTION AND RECOVERY. We will define and explain the difference between ID Theft and Credit Fraud. We will show ways of preventing and discovering ID Theft and then how to recover if you are a victim.

## 80th BIRTHDAY

Many credit bureaus have disappeared; the Peoria Credit Bureau, the Bloomington Credit Bureau, Princeton Credit Bureau, Lincoln Credit Bureau, Kankakee Credit Bureau and the Galesburg Credit Bureau, to name a few.

In June 2008 we will celebrate our 80th birthday. Mark your calendars for June 5 2008. That is the day we will have our 80th birthday party.

## TIPS FOR MERGED & MORTGAGE REPORTS

**Remember, never pull a joint report on 2 unmarried applicants!**

The credit bureaus will report them as married!

You can pull two individual reports then call us and we can merge them. You will then be able to import the new file to Fannie Mae.

If you have pulled a joint report you can permanently separate the file. Go to the UNMERGE section and uncheck the person you wish to remove from the report. Click View Report. When the newly separated file appears, you should see the button **PERMANENT UNMERGE**. Click on that button and you will create a new file with the one person's credit report.

## FAQS: CURRENCY

**What was the largest currency denomination ever produced?**

The largest denomination of currency ever printed by the [Bureau of Engraving and Printing](#) (BEP) was the \$100,000 Series 1934 **Gold Certificate** featuring the portrait of President Wilson. These notes were printed from December 18, 1934 through January 9, 1935 and were issued by the [Treasurer of the United States](#) to Federal Reserve Banks only against an equal amount of gold bullion held by the Treasury Department. The notes were used only for official transactions between Federal Reserve Banks and were not circulated among the general public.



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### **Did the Treasury Department ever produce a \$1 million currency note? I have one that I want to know about.**

We receive many inquiries asking if the Treasury Department ever produced a \$1 million currency note. People have sent in copies of these notes. We have found that they are nonnegotiable platinum certificates known as a "One Million Dollar Special Issue." These notes were from a special limited copyrighted art series originally sold by a Canadian firm for \$1.00 each as a collectible item. They are not official United States currency notes manufactured by our [Bureau of Engraving and Printing](#) (BEP). As such, they are not redeemable by the Department of the Treasury.

You may be interested to know that the BEP learned of these certificates in the spring of 1982. All related correspondence was forwarded to the United States Secret Service to decide if there were any violations of Federal currency laws. The Secret Service subsequently advised, however, that these certificates did not violate any United States law.

### **What denominations of currency notes is the Treasury Department no longer printing?**

On July 14, 1969, [David M. Kennedy](#), the 60th [Secretary of the Treasury](#), and officials at the Federal Reserve Board announced that they would immediately stop distributing currency in denominations of \$500, \$1,000, \$5,000 and \$10,000. Production of these denominations stopped during World War II. Their main purpose was for bank transfer payments. With the arrival of more secure transfer technologies, however, they were no longer needed for that purpose. While these notes are legal tender and may still be found in circulation today, the Federal Reserve Banks remove them from circulation and destroy them as they are received. (ustreas.gov)

## **RECORD DATA BREACHES IN 2007**

### **Number of Personal Data Breaches Hits Record in 2007 After TJX Credit-Card Thefts**

BOSTON (AP) -- The loss or theft of personal data such as credit card and Social Security numbers soared to unprecedented levels in 2007, and the trend isn't expected to turn around anytime soon as hackers stay a step ahead of security and laptops disappear with sensitive information.

And while companies, government agencies, schools and other institutions are spending more to protect ever-increasing volumes of

data with more sophisticated firewalls and encryption, the investment often is too little too late.

"More of them are experiencing data breaches, and they're responding to them in a reactive way, rather than proactively looking at the company's security and seeing where the holes might be," said Linda Foley, who founded the San Diego-based Identity Theft Resource Center after becoming an identity theft victim herself.

Foley's group lists more than 79 million records reported compromised in the United States through Dec. 18. That's a nearly fourfold increase from the nearly 20 million records reported in all of 2006.

Another group, Attrition.org, estimates more than 162 million records compromised through Dec. 21 -- both in the U.S. and overseas, unlike the other group's U.S.-only list. Attrition reported 49 million last year.

"It's just the nature of business, that moving forward, more companies are going to have more records, so there will be more records compromised each year," said Attrition's Brian Martin. "I imagine the total records compromised will steadily climb."

But the biggest difference between the groups' record-loss counts is Attrition.org's estimate that 94 million records were exposed in a theft of credit card data at TJX Cos., the owner of discount stores including T.J. Maxx and Marshalls. The TJX breach accounts for more than half the total records reported lost this year on both groups' lists.

The Identity Theft Resource Center counts about 46 million -- the number of records TJX acknowledged in March were potentially compromised. Attrition's figure is based on estimates from Visa and MasterCard officials who were deposed in a lawsuit banks filed against TJX.

The breach is believed to have started when hackers intercepted wireless transfers of customer information at two Marshalls stores in Miami -- an entry point that led the hackers to eventually break into TJX's central databases.

TJX has said that before the breach, which was revealed in January, it invested "millions of dollars on computer security, and believes our security was comparable to many major retailers."

With wireless data transmission more common, hackers increasingly are expected to target what many experts see as a major vulnerability. Eavesdroppers appear to be learning how to bypass security safeguards faster than ever, said Jay Tumas, the head of Harvard University's network operations, at a recent conference for information security professionals.

"Within a year or two, these folks are catching

up," Tumas said.

The two nonprofit groups' 2007 data also show rising numbers of incidents in which employees lose sensitive data, as opposed to cases of hacking.

Besides TJX's problem, major 2007 breaches include lost data disks with bank account numbers in Britain, a hacker attack of a U.S.-based online broker's database and a con that spilled resume contact information from a U.S. online jobs site.

"A lot of breaches are due to inadequate information handling, such as laptop computers with Social Security numbers on them that are lost," Foley said. "This is human error, and something that's completely avoidable, as opposed to a hacker breaking into your computer system."

Attrition.org and the Identity Theft Resource Center are the only groups, government included, maintaining databases on breaches and trends each year. They've been keeping track for only a handful of years, with varied and still-evolving methods of learning about breaches and estimating how many people were affected.

Despite those challenges, the two nonprofits say it's clear 2007 will end up a record year for the amount of information compromised, because of greater data loss and increased reporting of breaches.

Both groups acknowledge many breaches may be missing from their lists, because they largely count incidents reported in news media that they consider credible. Media coverage has risen in part because of the growing number of states requiring businesses and institutions to publicly disclose data losses. Thirty-seven states, plus Washington D.C., now have such requirements.

Because of proliferation of such laws, "it may take a year or two before things stabilize and we can see what's really happening," Foley said. "If that's the case, then we'll know whether businesses are practicing better information-handling techniques." (Sunday December 30, By Mark Jewell, AP)

### **KCB INFO SERVICES HOURS**

Monday - Friday 9:00am to 4:30pm

KCB Information Services offers: Consumer credit reports, Business Credit reports, Employment Credit reports, Residential Mortgage Credit Reports, Merged Credit Reports, Criminal background checks, Tenant Screening Reports, Flood Zone Determination, Flood Life of Loan Certification, Identity Authentication and KCB Checking History Reports.

KCB Information Services has served businesses since 1928 and serves Central Illinois for Experian and Equifax.