



The Cyber Risk in your Pocket Keeping your Mobile Device Safe

Governor Walker has declared October as Cyber Security Awareness Month here in Wisconsin. This is a great time to ask yourself this question, “Do I know how to keep myself, my family, and my business safe from cyber danger?”

There’s a cyber safety issue that few of us may have thought of and many of us have one in our pocket right now. It’s your mobile device. From smartphones to laptops and tablets, we are always within reach everywhere you go. These devices make it easy to connect to the world around you, but they can also carry a lot of info about you and your friends and family, like your contacts, photos, videos, location and health and financial data. It’s important to use your mobile safely.

Here are some great tips to keep your mobile life safe:

Secure your devices: Use strong passwords or touch ID features to lock your devices. These security measures can help protect your information if your devices are lost or stolen and keep prying eyes out.

Think before you app: Information about you, such as the games you like to play, your contacts list, where you shop and your location, has value - just like money. Be thoughtful about who gets that information and how it’s collected through apps.

Now you see me, now you don’t: Some stores and other locations look for devices with WiFi or Bluetooth turned on to track your movements while you are within range. Disable WiFi and Bluetooth when not in use.

Get savvy about WiFi hotspots: Public wireless networks and hotspots are not secure, which means that anyone could potentially see what you are doing on your mobile device while you are connected. Limit what you do on public WiFi and avoid logging in to key accounts like email and financial services on these networks. Consider using a virtual private network (VPN) or a personal/mobile hotspot if you need a more secure connection on the go.

Keep your mobile devices and apps up to date: Your mobile devices are just as vulnerable as your PC or laptop. Having the most up-to-date security software, web browser, operating system and apps is the best defense against viruses, malware and other online threats.

Delete when done: Many of us download apps for specific purposes, such as planning a vacation, and no longer need them afterwards, or we may have previously downloaded apps that are no longer useful or interesting to us. It's a good security practice to delete all apps you no longer use.

Cyber security is a shared responsibility. Share cyber safety tips with your family, friends and co-workers. Together we can all live in a safer and more secure online world.