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MADIGAN URGES CONSUMERS TO PROTECT AGAINST IDENTITY THEFT IN WAKE OF DATA BREACHES

Illinois, Connecticut Lead Investigation into Massive Security Breaches at Target, Neiman Marcus

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today alerted consumers to several steps they can take to protect themselves against identity theft and unauthorized charges in the wake of data breaches reported by Target and Neiman Marcus stores nationwide.

Madigan is urging consumers to immediately take several steps to protect their bank and credit card accounts:

- You can cancel your old debit or credit card and obtain new cards.
- You can contact your bank to change your debit card PIN numbers and passwords, if you have ever used a debit card to shop at a Target store.
- You can check your bank and credit card accounts daily online and your billing statements every month. Contest unauthorized charges immediately over the phone and in writing.
- Any consumer who has ever shopped at a U.S. Target store can sign up for free credit monitoring being offered by the company in response to its massive data breach. Visit creditmonitoring.target.com to sign up. Consumers must sign up by April 23. You will be provided a copy of your credit report, daily credit monitoring and access to personalized assistance from a fraud resolution agent. But understand, you will not see unauthorized charges through the monitoring, but will see if new accounts are opened in your name or a change of address for an account has been requested.
- You can set up an alert on your account to receive notification when your credit or debit card is used over and above a certain dollar figure. This is called "Setting Transaction Alerts."
- Beware of callers who claim to be with your card issuing bank. These calls may be a scam. Consumers should contact their bank first at the toll-free number on the back of your card before you disclose any personal information.

Madigan and Connecticut Attorney General George Jepsen are leading an investigation into both breaches of customers' personal financial information.

"The magnitude of the Target breach is a wakeup call to all shoppers to be vigilant about activity on your credit and debit cards—because it's not a matter of if but when you are going to be a victim of identity theft or a security breach," Madigan said. "This is why I created our identity theft hotline in 2006. My office can provide you with resources on how to best protect your personal and financial information and how to clean up and restore your credit if you have been victimized. Please visit our website for further information or call my office for assistance."

Last month, Target first reported a data breach affecting 40 million customers during November and December 2013. Stolen information included credit and debit card data, customer names and PIN numbers. Last week, Target further revealed that names, mailing addresses, phone numbers and email addresses for up to an additional 70 million people nationwide were also compromised.

Media reports have additionally indicated the department store chain Neiman Marcus sustained a recent data breach, which Madigan's office is investigating.

Consumers with questions regarding Target's breach are encouraged to visit target.com/databreach or to contact Target directly at (866) 852-8680.

Consumers can also contact Madigan's Identity Theft Hotline at 1 (866) 999-5630. The hotline is staffed with identity theft experts who can help victims report the crime to local law enforcement and financial institutions, work to repair their credit and prevent future theft. Hotline operators can also assist callers who want to take proactive steps to prevent their personal information from being stolen.

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