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**MADIGAN URGES HOME DEPOT CUSTOMERS TO TAKE CAUTION, REPORT UNAUTHORIZED CHARGES**

**Chicago** — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today warned consumers to be on the lookout for unauthorized charges as Home Depot investigates a possible data breach affecting stores nationwide.

Madigan also said her office is looking into the possible breach of customers' personal financial information.

"Consumers who have shopped at a Home Depot store with a debit or credit card should begin monitoring their accounts immediately for unauthorized charges," Madigan said. "Identity theft is a serious threat to consumers. Incorporating a few commonsense precautions in your daily routine can greatly reduce the threat and any damage done as a result of a data breach."

Madigan offered these tips for consumers who have shopped at Home Depot using a debit or credit card:

- **Set up Transaction Alerts** on your accounts to receive notifications when your credit or debit card is used above a certain dollar amount, so if someone uses your card without authorization, you'll receive a text message or email and can immediately call your card issuer to dispute the charge.
- **Regularly review your bank and credit card statements** to make sure there are no unauthorized transactions. Contest any unauthorized charges immediately by contacting your bank using the toll-free number on the back of your credit or debit card. Prompt reporting of unauthorized charges is critical to limit your liability, particularly if you are a debit card user because liability depends on how quickly you report a lost or stolen card. For instance, if you report a lost or stolen debit card before any unauthorized transactions occur, you are not responsible for any of the unauthorized charges, but if you make the report within two business days of losing your card, you can be liable for up to \$50 of unauthorized charges. After two days, reporting lost or stolen cards can increase your liability anywhere from \$500 and up.
- **Review your credit reports for unauthorized accounts.** You are entitled to one free credit report from each of the three nationwide credit reporting agencies per year. Go to [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com), or call 1-877-322-8228 to order your credit reports. Make sure all the information is correct. If not, immediately contact the credit reporting agency to request that the information be explained or corrected.
- **Consider putting a security freeze on your credit.** A security freeze, also known as a credit freeze, essentially locks down your personal data at the consumer reporting agency until an individual gives permission for the release of the data, which can prevent someone from taking out credit in your name. You can easily have the freeze lifted when you want to allow a company to check your credit if, for instance, you are opening new accounts or purchasing a car or home.

For questions or help if you have been a victim of identity theft, contact Madigan's Identity Theft Hotline at 1-866-999-5630. Madigan's Identity Theft Unit has helped over 35,000 victims remove over \$26 million in fraudulent charges from their credit.

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