



**Weld County  
District Attorney's Office  
Nineteenth Judicial District**

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# Fraud Alert!

## HELPFUL HINTS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

**Weld County District Attorney Kenneth R. Buck would like you to take note of the following information so that you aren't the next victim.**

'Tis the season to purchase gifts for our friends and family. And while we will be heading out to the mall or to the web to find just the right gift to give, thieves will be heading out to find personal information to take. According to Nationwide Insurance chief privacy officer and expert on identity theft Kirk Herath, "...the more purchases you make, the more your financial information is put at risk." So, with that in mind, here are some reminders of what you can do to protect yourself from identity theft this holiday season.

### **Shred, shred, shred:**

Stealing trash is still the primary way thieves obtain your personal information. Shred everything that has your personal information on it—preferably with a cross-cut shredder. Another hint: if you are shredding very sensitive information such as credit card applications, mix the shredded paper up, throw out half of the paper one week, half the next week. If someone steals your trash, at least they won't have a complete document to put back together.

### **Protect your personal space:**

Shoulder surfing occurs when someone stands close to you or looks over your shoulder while you complete your financial transaction. While you are paying for your goods, the thief is stealing your card number. Camera phones can also be used in this

theft of information as people may try to take a picture of your credit card or check.

### **Save your receipts:**

When making a credit or debit card purchase, always take the receipt with you and shred it at home. Although most receipts show only the last four digits of your account number, some receipts show everything but the last four digits. If someone were to get a hold of your receipts, they may be able to piece together a complete account number.

### **Online Fraud:**

If you are shopping online this season, be sure to take precautions. Use well-known sites from trusted brands like Amazon.com, Target.com, etc., look for the https in the URL address and/or the lock on the bottom of the web page, and always monitor your credit card statements.

Also, many people have been receiving emails stating that the product they purchased online is ready to be shipped, and if they would like to cancel their purchase they can do so by filling out the form in the email. This is a scam that, once again, is trying to get your personal information. How can we be sure? The people receiving the email had not purchased anything. Never respond to unsolicited emails.

**Contact your local police agency if you think you are a victim of a crime.  
To contact the Weld County District Attorney's Office, call (970) 356-4010 ext. 4722.**

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**S E R V I C E**