NEWS RELEASE

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

datcp.wi.gov

Cyber Security Awareness Month – Daily Tips, Week 5: Lock Down Your Login

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MADISON – In recognition of Wisconsin's Cyber Security Awareness Month, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) has released a cyber safety tip each weekday in October, with each week addressing a different theme. The agency releases the daily tips through the Bureau of Consumer Protection's Facebook page and Twitter account.

Media partners that may wish to cover the cyber tip topics can contact Jerad Albracht (Senior Communications Specialist, 608-224-5007, jerad.albracht@wisconsin.gov) if they would like to speak about the campaign or about a specific tip.

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Cyber Security Awareness Month, Week 5: Lock Down Your Login

Monday, 10/29. Build better passwords, be better protected

Take steps to strengthen the security around your online accounts by creating longer, more complex passwords that are tougher to crack. Use a passphrase: a combination of numbers, letters, and special characters that spells out a phrase that you will remember.

For example, the phrase "I am happy to be here!" could be coded as "Iam:)2bH!"

Keep unique passwords for every online account and make sure to use an especially strong password for your email. Many websites send password update and account access emails to users, so getting a hold of these emails could potentially give a hacker access to all of your online accounts. Your email password should be the toughest to decode.

For more tips, check out DATCP's "Creating Strong Passwords" fact sheet. #CyberAware

Tuesday, 10/30. Use two-factor authentication when available

Two-factor authentication is a security process in which you provide two means of identification in order to log into a system – something you have and something you know. Something you have is typically a physical token, such as a fob, fingerprint, or a code sent to your smartphone. Something you know is something memorized, such as a personal identification number (PIN) or a password.

If it sounds confusing, think about this: when you use your credit card at the gas pump, you already use two-factor authentication. You swipe your card (something you have) and enter your ZIP code (something you know). So if one of your favorite websites strengthens its security features and offers to send you an additional passcode for logging in, take them up on it. #CyberAware

(MORE)

Wednesday, 10/31. Your educational journey starts now

October may be coming to an end, but your cyber education is just beginning! There are a number of great resources available to help you strengthen the security around your web-enabled devices and online accounts.

Start with the DATCP website (datcp.wi.gov), particularly our consumer protection fact sheets, identity theft fact sheets, and Consumer Alerts. Remember to contact the Consumer Protection Hotline (800-422-7182; datcphotline@wi.gov) if you ever question a sales pitch or a threat you receive by email, text, or phone.

The National Cyber Security Alliance's StaySafeOnline website (staysafeonline.org) offers a wealth of cyber tips for families and businesses alike.

The FTC's Consumer Blog (consumer.ftc.gov) offers near-daily posts about scams that Americans are facing and actions the agency is taking against fraudsters. Keeping abreast of the latest scams will help you stay ahead of the con artists.

The FBI has developed a free computer literacy program called "Safe Online Surfing" or "SOS." SOS is a series of online games for grades three through eight that help your child learn about important cyber security topics like passwords, downloading apps, screening friend requests and more. Check it out at sos.fbi.gov. #CyberAware