

# ***BETter Living ...***

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**March 9, 2017**

## **Are You Protected?**

Do you think about what you are putting online? We have many ways to shop, bank, and receive information. Many of us use the internet each and every day. March 5-11 is Consumer Protection Week. This week I will highlight ways to protect yourself when online.

Ways to protect yourself when online:

- Use security software that updates automatically.
- Do not hand out your personal information to just anyone – social security and credit card numbers, bank accounts, etc.
- Do not send your personal information in an email or text.
- When shopping online, check out what company you are working with to make sure they are creditable.
- Verify that the website is encrypted before placing personal information on the site. Look for https at the beginning of the web address.
- Protect all of your passwords. Use passwords that contain letters, numbers, and special characters. Do not have the same password for all accounts.
- Back up your files. By using an external hard drive as a backup you are ensuring a safe storage space.

Now the next time you go online, please remember the tips above to help protect your personal information. For more ways to protect your identity, visit: [www.consumer.ftc.gov](http://www.consumer.ftc.gov).

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