



NATIONAL CRIME PREVENTION COUNCIL

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When Cyber Crime Bites You Can “Byte” Back

McGruff Calls for Consumers to Protect Home Computers During Consumer Awareness Week

Washington, DC — The rise in data theft, identity theft, and computer hacking has McGruff the Crime Dog® “biting” mad for the more than 100 million people—a third of the U.S. population—who have been affected by data compromises over the last 18 months. Consumer Awareness Week will be April 16–20 and a perfect time to remind consumers of the tools they can use to fight back against cyber crime.

As part of the “Take A Bite Out of Cyber Crime” campaign, the National Crime Prevention Council and its icon McGruff are using Consumer Awareness Week to call for consumers to protect their home computers with a few easy-to-do tips:

- Keep your personal information private and your passwords secure. Change your passwords every 90 days to keep cyber criminals away.
- Beware of “phishing.” These are email requests purporting to be from your bank, credit card company, or other trusted sources that ask you to “verify” passwords, bank account numbers, or credit card information. Don’t get lured in.
- Use only secure websites for purchases. Look for a secure padlock icon at the bottom of the browser window or an “https” in the URL address.
- Shop with companies you know and trust. Check for background information if you plan to buy from a new or unfamiliar company.
- Before surfing the Internet, secure your personal computers by updating your security software. Everyone should have antivirus, anti-spyware, and anti-spam software installed. Visit www.bytecrime.org for free software downloads.
- Install or active a firewall. A firewall is a digital barrier designed to keep hackers out. Most operating systems have them, so make sure you turn yours on. If you don’t have one, you can easily download one.
- Never open emails from people you do not know. Instead delete it and report it as spam to your email company or administrator.
- Learn the rules and policies of online stores and auction sites and follow them for all your transactions.

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About “Take A Bite Out Of Cyber Crime”

McGruff the Crime Dog®, the National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC), the Forum to Advance the Mobile Experience (FAME), and the Chief Marketing Office Council (CMO Council) have joined together to “Take A Bite Out Of Cyber Crime.” The campaign is empowering and rallying

millions of computer and digital device users in the battle against the continually growing plague of computer viruses, worms, spam, spyware, phishing, identity theft, and online predators. For more information, visit www.bytecrime.org.

About the National Crime Prevention Council

The National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) is a private, nonprofit organization whose primary mission is to be the nation's leader in helping people keep themselves, their families, and their communities safe from crime. NCPC manages public service advertising under the National Citizens' Crime Prevention Campaign—symbolized by McGruff the Crime Dog® and his "Take A Bite Out Of Crime®" slogan—and acts as secretariat for the Crime Prevention Coalition of America, more than 400 national, federal, state, and local organizations representing thousands of constituents who are committed to preventing crime. NCPC is funded through a variety of government agencies, corporate and private foundations, and donations from private individuals. For more information on crime prevention issues, visit www.ncpc.org.