

Wisconsin Department of Military Affairs: October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month in Wisconsin

Posted on Tuesday, Oct 1, 2019

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MADISON, Wis. — The internet has made everything from paying bills to staying in touch with family easier. It has also opened many new ways for criminals to target sensitive personal and financial information, making it essential that everyone learn how to protect themselves. To encourage everyone to learn more about their digital risk, Gov. Tony Evers has declared October Cybersecurity Awareness Month in Wisconsin.

“Cybersecurity is everyone’s responsibility,” said Maj. Gen. Don Dunbar, Wisconsin’s adjutant general and homeland security advisor. “Our digital and virtual world continues to expand and evolve; and it is an essential part of our public and private lives. Protecting our digital profile and our personal information is of the highest importance from both a privacy and a property perspective.”

“During the month of October, everyone should examine the security surrounding their digital profile and what they can do to improve it,” said David Cagigal, chief information officer with the Wisconsin Department of Administration’s Division of Enterprise Technology. “We want them to remember three key phrases this month – Own IT. Secure IT. Protect IT.”

Own IT – Understanding your digital profile and how it can be accessed is key to learning how to protect it. Cell phones, computers, and other smart devices in your home can all serve as potential access points for digital thieves. Users should keep track of where their personal information has been entered on physical devices, along with what online accounts they have created and what information is publicly viewable through them.

Secure IT – Most online systems include security measures that are meant to make it harder for unauthorized users to access your accounts. However, criminals have become very skilled at getting account information out of users. Make sure you are using all the tools available for securing accounts by setting strong passwords, using two-factor authentication when available, and by watching for phishing scams.

Protect IT – Every action you take online leaves behind a digital trail, which cybercriminals can try to use to their advantage when attempting to access your digital profile. Make sure you are practicing good cyber hygiene by regularly reviewing privacy settings on any publicly viewable platform, while setting strong passwords for your accounts and changing them regularly.

“While the state remains vigilant to the many cyber threats that exist, criminals are always finding new ways to launch attacks,” Cagigal said. “It is vital that everyone do their part to help prevent them from gaining access to sensitive personal information.”

Find more tips on protecting yourself from cyber crimes at <https://readywisconsin.wi.gov/cyber/>