

CONNECT WITH THE BUREAU OF CONSUMER PROTECTION

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WISCAP Community Action Conference



Michelle Reinen, Division Administrator / Michael Domke, Bureau Director

Division of Trade & Consumer Protection

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION (DATCP)

May 23, 2023

CONSUMER PROTECTION

WORKING TOGETHER TO PROTECT WISCONSIN CONSUMERS



DIVISION OF TRADE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Bureau of Trade Practices

- Regulates unfair business practices and methods of competition
- Protects agricultural producers against catastrophic defaults
- Grades and certifies grain, fruits and vegetables

Bureau of Weights and Measures

- Responsible for monitoring the accuracy of gas pumps, price scanners, scales and package weights
- Responsible for testing fuel quality and fuel pump safety

Bureau of Consumer Protection

- Wisconsin's primary consumer protection agency



BUREAU OF CONSUMER PROTECTION

- Our mission is to ensure fair business practices for buyers and sellers alike by prohibiting fraud, deception, and unfair business practices in the marketplace.
- The bureau administers more than 60 consumer protection statutes and rules that serve as a framework that allows legitimate businesses to flourish and provides consumers with confidence in the marketplace.



BUREAU OF CONSUMER PROTECTION











What we do:

- Operate Wisconsin's Consumer Protection Hotline: (800) 422-7128
- Mediate consumer complaints, investigate cases, and take enforcement action
- Educate and inform Wisconsin consumers and businesses
- Administer Wisconsin's telemarketing "Do Not Call" law
- Provide identity theft assistance and education
- Administer the Security Program
- Regulate hazardous consumer products
- Enforce environmental regulations related to consumer products



BUREAU OF CONSUMER PROTECTION – 2023 TOP COMPLAINTS

- Mediated more than 10,800 written consumer complaints.
- Handled more than 26,000 calls and emails to Consumer Protection Hotline.
- Returned approximately \$3.3 million to affected consumers and general school fund in 2023.

Rank	Category	Complaints
1	 Landlord/Tenant	2,208
2	 Telemarketing	1,276
3	 Home Improvement	867
4	 Telecommunications	642
5	 Identity Theft	459
6	 Medical Services	380
7	 Motor Vehicle Repair	352
8	 Travel	255
9	 Motor Vehicle Sales	233
10	 Motor Vehicle Accessories	185



BUREAU OF CONSUMER PROTECTION – OUTREACH

TOPIC	2023 TOTAL
Common Scams and Fraud	224
Identity Theft	76
Landlord Tenant	33
BCP Overview	31
Internet Safety for Middle Schoolers	27
BCP For Law Enforcement	11
BCP for Young Adults	10
Business Scams	10
Home Improvement	10
Military Identity Theft	10
Children's Online Awareness	8
Motor Vehicle Repair	8
Business ID Theft	2
Safe Online Shopping	2
TOTAL	462



BUREAU OF CONSUMER PROTECTION – OUTREACH

<u>Audience</u>	<u>2023 Totals</u>
Consumers	165
Seniors	146
Young Adults	54
Businesses	43
Gov. Agency	15
Law Enforcement	14
Conference Booth	11
Military	10
Educators/Parents	4
TOTAL	462



BUREAU OF CONSUMER PROTECTION - OUTREACH

- Common Scams & Fraud
- Identity Theft & Privacy Protection
- Landlord & Tenant - Rights & Responsibilities
- Home Improvement Contracts
- Consumer Protection for Young Adults
- General Consumer Protection
- Motor Vehicle Repair
- Scams & Fraud Targeting Small Businesses
- Privacy & Security for Businesses
- Safe Online Shopping
- Children's Online Awareness



WORKING TOGETHER TO PROTECT WISCONSIN CONSUMERS

2024



**Wisconsin Department of Agriculture,
Trade and Consumer Protection**

Bureau of Consumer Protection

2811 Agriculture Drive, PO Box 8911

Madison, WI 53708-8911

Website: datcp.wi.gov

Email: DATCPHotline@wisconsin.gov

Phone: [\(800\) 422-7128](tel:(800)422-7128)

TTY: [\(608\) 224-5058](tel:(608)224-5058)



SOCIAL MEDIA ON ISSUES

How to manage your privacy settings on Facebook.



- Click your profile picture to view a drop-down menu of account settings.
- Select ⚙ "Settings & Privacy."
- Select ⚙ "Settings" or complete the "Privacy Checkup" if using a mobile device.



Keep your account and your personal information private.

English

Cómo administrar su configuración de privacidad en: Facebook



- Haga clic en su foto de perfil para ver el menú desplegable de configuración de la cuenta.
- Seleccione ⚙ "Configuración y privacidad".
- Seleccione ⚙ "Configuración" o complete la "Comprobación de privacidad" si usa un dispositivo móvil.



Mantenga su información personal privada.

Spanish



REQUEST **FREE**
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ANNUALCREDITREPORT.COM.



English

SOLICITE SUS
INFORMES DE
CRÉDITO **GRATUITOS**
SEMANTALMENTE EN
ANNUALCREDITREPORT.COM.



Spanish



STORM REPAIR CONTRACTOR TIPS

- ⚡ Ask people you trust for recommendations.
- ⚡ Get all work and contract details in writing.
- ⚡ Avoid high-pressure sales tactics.

Learn more at ConsumerProtection.wi.gov



English

CONSEJOS RELACIONADOS CON LOS CONTRATISTAS DE REPARACIONES DE DAÑOS DE LAS TORMENTAS

- ⚡ Pida recomendaciones a personas en las que confíe.
- ⚡ Obtenga todos los detalles del trabajo que le realizarán y del contrato por escrito.
- ⚡ Evite las tácticas de venta de alta presión.

Obtenga más información en ConsumerProtection.wi.gov



Spanish



PRESS RELEASES , MEDIA NOTES & TALKING POINTS

English

NEWS RELEASE
Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection datcp.wi.gov

October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month in Wisconsin

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 28, 2023
Contact: Caleb Kulich, Public Information Officer, (608) 621-1290, caleb.kulich@wisconsin.gov

MADISON, Wis. – In observance of Governor Evers' proclamation recognizing October 2023 as Cybersecurity Awareness Month in Wisconsin, DATCP is partnering with the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) and Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) to share educational materials about how individuals and organizations can protect personal data, private information, and the digital networks and systems we all rely on.

The theme of this year's national campaign, "Secure Our World," emphasizes that as we become more dependent on technology, it is more important than ever to strengthen and adapt our cybersecurity habits. Cybersecurity practices can sometimes require some effort, but they are simple, effective, and easy to remember. DATCP, DOA, WEM, and the National Cybersecurity Alliance and Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency recommend these steps to improve online privacy and safety:

- Update your software regularly to optimize performance and minimize security risks.
- Create strong, unique passwords and consider using a password manager.
- Enable multi-factor login authentication on your digital accounts.
- Recognize and report phishing attempts.

"Technology is always changing. That makes Cybersecurity Awareness Month a great opportunity to reassess and adjust our personal practices," said DATCP Secretary Randy Romanski. "Whether they are already experienced users or new to the idea of cybersecurity, Wisconsin consumers, businesses, and government agencies all benefit from improved digital safety measures."

"We all have a responsibility to protect our information, both online and offline," said DOA Secretary Kathy Blumenfeld. "DOA is proud to partner with state agencies and our partners statewide to share resources and help people safeguard their digital assets from bad actors."

"With the increasing threat of malicious cyber activities, it's important that everyone takes action to remain secure," said Maj. Gen. Paul Knapp, Wisconsin's adjutant general and the governor's chief cybersecurity advisor. "Staying safe online is easier when people learn how to protect themselves and their workplace, which also includes knowing what to do if they are the victim of a cyber-crime."

For additional information and consumer protection resources or to file a complaint, visit DATCP's Consumer Protection webpage at ConsumerProtection.wi.gov. If you have questions or believe you are a victim of a scam, report it by contacting DATCP's Consumer Protection Hotline by phone at (800) 422-7128 or email at DATCPHotline@wisconsin.gov.

###

Find more DATCP news in our [newsroom](#), on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).



Spanish

NEWS RELEASE
Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection datcp.wi.gov

Octubre es el mes de la concientización de la ciberseguridad en Wisconsin

PARA DIVULGACION INMEDIATA: 28 de septiembre de 2023
Contacto: Caleb Kulich, Public Information Officer, (608) 621-1290, caleb.kulich@wisconsin.gov

MADISON, Wis. – En cumplimiento con la proclamación del Gobernador Evers que reconoce octubre de 2023 como el Mes de la Concientización de la Ciberseguridad en Wisconsin, DATCP está colaborando con Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) y Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) para compartir materiales educativos sobre cómo las personas y las organizaciones pueden proteger sus datos digitales personales, el manejo de la información privada y las redes y sistemas digitales de los que todos dependemos.

El tema de la campaña nacional de este año, "Asegurar nuestro mundo", enfatiza que a medida que nos hacemos más dependientes de las tecnologías, es más importante que nunca que fortalezcamos y adaptemos nuestros hábitos de ciberseguridad. Las prácticas de ciberseguridad a veces pueden requerir cierto esfuerzo, pero son simples, efectivas y fáciles de recordar. DATCP, DOA, WEM y la Alianza Nacional de Ciberseguridad y la Agencia de Seguridad de Infraestructura y Ciberseguridad recomiendan estos pasos para fortalecer la privacidad y seguridad en línea:


- Actualice su software periódicamente para optimizar el rendimiento y minimizar los riesgos asociados con la seguridad cibernética.
- Cree contraseñas seguras y únicas y considere usar un administrador electrónico de contraseñas.
- Habilite la autenticación de inicio de sesión multifactorial en sus cuentas digitales.
- Aprenda a reconocer las señales de filtración de datos y repórtelo.

"La tecnología cambia constantemente. Eso hace que el Mes de la concientización sobre la ciberseguridad sea una gran oportunidad para reevaluar y ajustar nuestras prácticas personales", dijo el secretario del DATCP, Randy Romanski. "Sin importar si los usuarios sean experimentados o nuevos al concepto de la ciberseguridad: los consumidores, las empresas y las agencias gubernamentales de Wisconsin se benefician de mejores medidas de seguridad digital."

"Todos tenemos la responsabilidad de proteger nuestra información, sin importar si estamos en Internet, o fuera del internet", dijo la secretaria de DOA, Kathy Blumenfeld. "DOA se enorgullece de colaborar con agencias estatales y nuestros socios en todo el estado para compartir recursos y ayudar a las personas a salvaguardar sus bienes digitales y mantenerlos alejados del alcance de los malos actores."

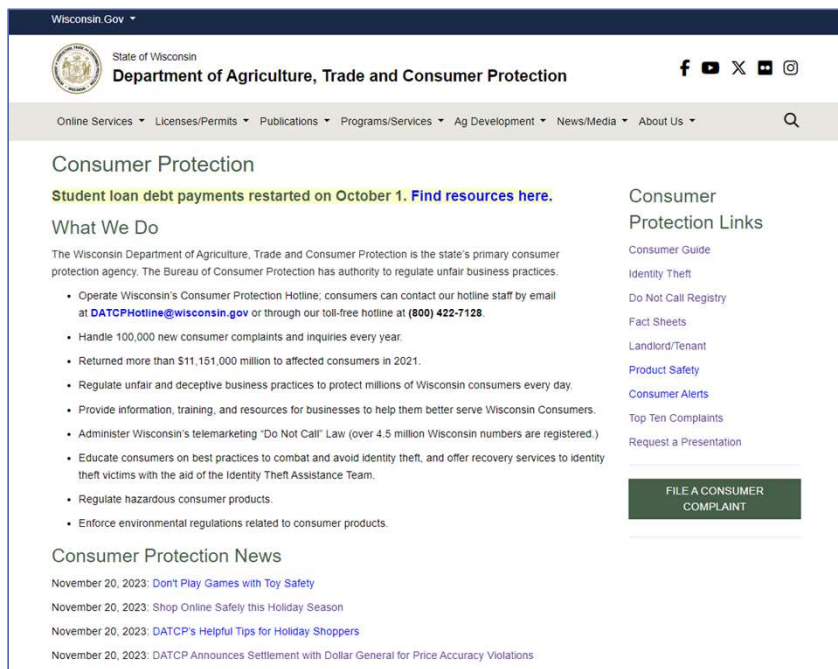
"Con la creciente amenaza de actividades cibernéticas de carácter malicioso que hemos observado, es importante que todos tomen medidas para salvaguardar su seguridad cibernética." Dijo Maj. Gen. Paul Knapp, en su capacidad de jefe de ciberseguridad del gobernador y general adjunto del estado. "Salvaguardar la seguridad en internet es más fácil cuando las personas aprenden a protegerse individualmente y a la misma vez aprenden a proteger su centro de trabajo, lo que también incluye saber qué hacer si son víctimas de un delito cibernético."

Para obtener información adicional y recursos de protección al consumidor o para presentar una queja, visite el sitio Web de la Oficina de Protección al Consumidor de DATCP en ConsumerProtection.wi.gov. Si tiene preguntas o cree que ha sido víctima de una estafa, repórtelo comunicándose con la línea directa de protección al consumidor de DATCP al (800) 422-7128 o por correo electrónico a DATCPHotline@wisconsin.gov.



WEBSITE UPDATES

Before...



Wisconsin Gov

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Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

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Consumer Protection

Student loan debt payments restarted on October 1. Find resources here.

What We Do

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection is the state's primary consumer protection agency. The Bureau of Consumer Protection has authority to regulate unfair business practices.

- Operate Wisconsin's Consumer Protection Hotline; consumers can contact our hotline staff by email at DATCPHotline@wisconsin.gov or through our toll-free hotline at **(800) 422-7128**.
- Handle 100,000 new consumer complaints and inquiries every year.
- Returned more than \$11,151,000 million to affected consumers in 2021.
- Regulate unfair and deceptive business practices to protect millions of Wisconsin consumers every day.
- Provide information, training, and resources for businesses to help them better serve Wisconsin Consumers.
- Administer Wisconsin's telemarketing "Do Not Call" Law (over 4.5 million Wisconsin numbers are registered.)
- Educate consumers on best practices to combat and avoid identity theft, and offer recovery services to identify theft victims with the aid of the Identity Theft Assistance Team.
- Regulate hazardous consumer products.
- Enforce environmental regulations related to consumer products.

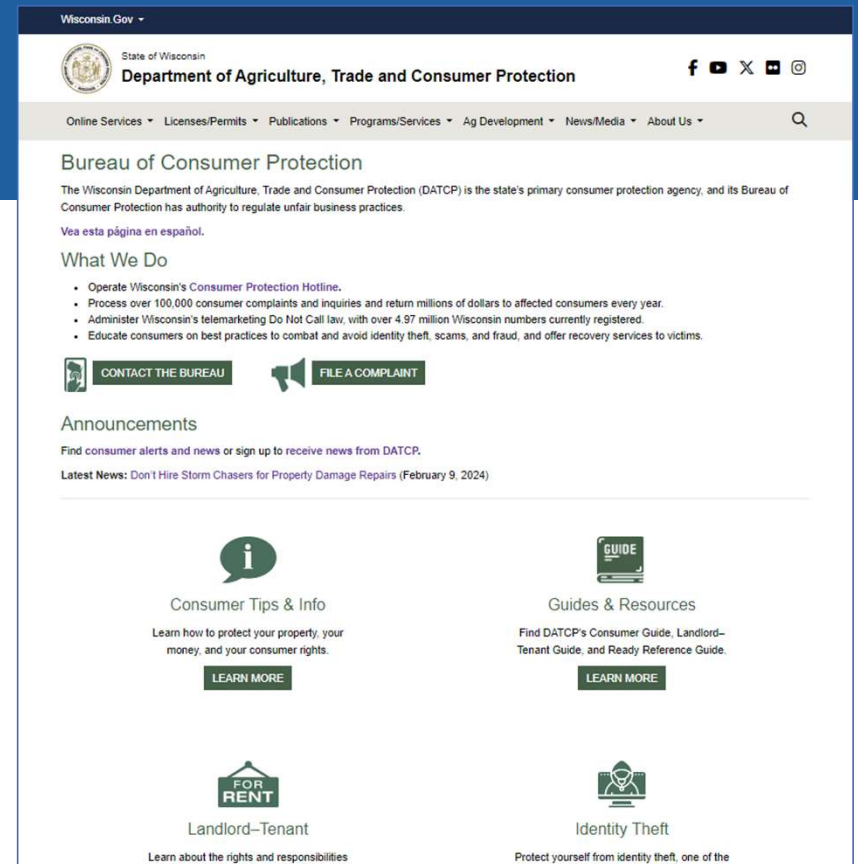
Consumer Protection Links

- Consumer Guide
- Identity Theft
- Do Not Call Registry
- Fact Sheets
- Landlord/Tenant
- Product Safety
- Consumer Alerts
- Top Ten Complaints
- Request a Presentation

FILE A CONSUMER COMPLAINT

Consumer Protection News

- November 20, 2023: Don't Play Games with Toy Safety
- November 20, 2023: Shop Online Safely this Holiday Season
- November 20, 2023: DATCP's Helpful Tips for Holiday Shoppers
- November 20, 2023: DATCP Announces Settlement with Dollar General for Price Accuracy Violations



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Bureau of Consumer Protection

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[Vea esta página en español.](#)

What We Do

- Operate Wisconsin's Consumer Protection Hotline.
- Process over 100,000 consumer complaints and inquiries and return millions of dollars to affected consumers every year.
- Administer Wisconsin's telemarketing Do Not Call law, with over 4.97 million Wisconsin numbers currently registered.
- Educate consumers on best practices to combat and avoid identity theft, scams, and fraud, and offer recovery services to victims.

CONTACT THE BUREAU **FILE A COMPLAINT**

Announcements

Find consumer alerts and news or sign up to receive news from DATCP.

Latest News: Don't Hire Storm Chasers for Property Damage Repairs (February 9, 2024)

Consumer Tips & Info
Learn how to protect your property, your money, and your consumer rights.
LEARN MORE

Guides & Resources
Find DATCP's Consumer Guide, Landlord-Tenant Guide, and Ready Reference Guide.
LEARN MORE

FOR RENT
Landlord-Tenant
Learn about the rights and responsibilities

Identity Theft
Protect yourself from identity theft, one of the



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Oficina de Protección al Consumidor

El Departamento de Agricultura, Comercio y Protección al Consumidor de Wisconsin (DATCP, por sus siglas en inglés) es la principal agencia de protección al consumidor del estado. La Oficina de Protección al Consumidor tiene autoridad para regular las prácticas comerciales injustas.

Access this page in English.

Qué hacemos

- Operamos la línea directa de Protección al Consumidor de Wisconsin.
- Procesamos más de 100,000 quejas y consultas de consumidores y devolvemos millones de dólares a los consumidores anualmente.
- Administramos la ley de No Llame de telemarketing de Wisconsin, con más de 4.97 millones de números de Wisconsin registrados actualmente.
- Educamos a los consumidores sobre las mejores prácticas para combatir y evitar el robo de identidad, las estafas y el fraude. También ofrecemos servicios de recuperación a las víctimas.

CONTACTÉNOS PRESENTE UNA QUEJA DEL CONSUMIDOR

Anuncios

Acceda noticias y alertas para consumidores de DATCP. Suscríbase para recibir comunicados de prensa de DATCP.

Últimas noticias: Don't Hire Storm Chasers for Property Damage Repairs (February 9, 2024)

Consejos e información para el consumidor

Conozca lo que tiene que hacer para proteger su propiedad, su dinero y sus derechos como consumidor.

[OBTENGA MÁS INFORMACIÓN](#)

Guías y recursos

Acceda la Guía para el consumidor de DATCP: la Guía para propietarios e inquilinos y la Guía de referidos.

[OBTENGA MÁS INFORMACIÓN](#)

Propietarios e inquilinos

Conozca los derechos y responsabilidades de

Robo de identidad

Protéjase del robo de identidad, una de las

Spanish

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Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

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Landlord-Tenant

Learn about the rights and responsibilities

Identity Theft

Protect yourself from identity theft, one of the

English



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Consumer Protection Fact Sheets

Our facts sheets are informational brochures on specific consumer protection-related topics. Each one is intended to be a starting point for helpful hints and answers to frequently asked questions.

Choose from the topics below:

Spanish Language Resources

- Advertising and Marketing
- Assistance
- [Business Opportunities](#)

Business Opportunities

Want to "be your own boss," "work from home," or just "make extra money?" Then you may be tempted by an advertisement for a business opportunity. Before you pay anything, check out the offer.

Chain Letters

Chain letters promise a big return on a small investment. It could be the promise of unprecedented good luck, recipes or huge financial rewards for a mere \$5 investment. Do not waste your money! Chain letters are illegal and they do not work.

Featured Fact Sheets

- [Ten Tips to Avoid Fraud](#)
- [Consumer Guide](#)
- [Landlord/Tenant Guide](#)
- [Identity Theft: Consumer Tips](#)

Contact

Bureau of Consumer Protection
 (800) 422-7128
DATCPHotline@wi.gov

[Identity Theft/Privacy Protection Fact Sheets](#)

FILE A CONSUMER COMPLAINT

State of Wisconsin
Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

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Hojas Informativas

¡La Guía de DATCP para Personas Mayores se encuentra disponible para descarga gratuita! La Guía para Personas Mayores contiene casi 50 páginas de información para ayudar a personas mayores de Wisconsin a través de cuestiones difíciles del consumidor o para ayudarles a identificar estafas. [Haga clic aquí](#) para descargar una copia pdf de la guía.

ASISTENCIA / ASSISTANCE

Cómo Presentar una Queja / Filing a Complaint	Español	English
Consejos antes de firmar un contrato / Contracts	Español	English
Formulario de Queja / Complaint Form	Español	English
Tribunal de Reclamos Menores / Small Claims Court	Español	English

CARIDADES / CHARITIES

Peticiones de Caridad / Charity Requests	Español	English
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CARROS / CARS

Pedido por Correo / Mail Order	Español	English
Reparación de Vehículos Motorizados / Motor Vehicle Repair	Español	English

COMIDA / FOOD

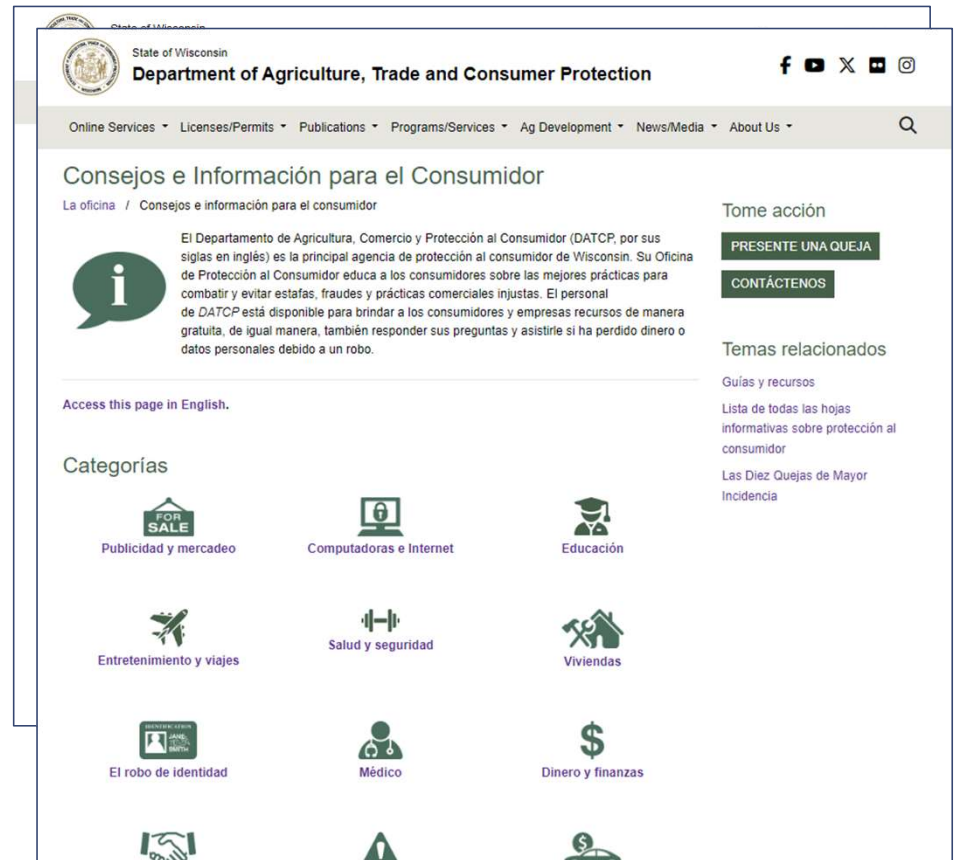
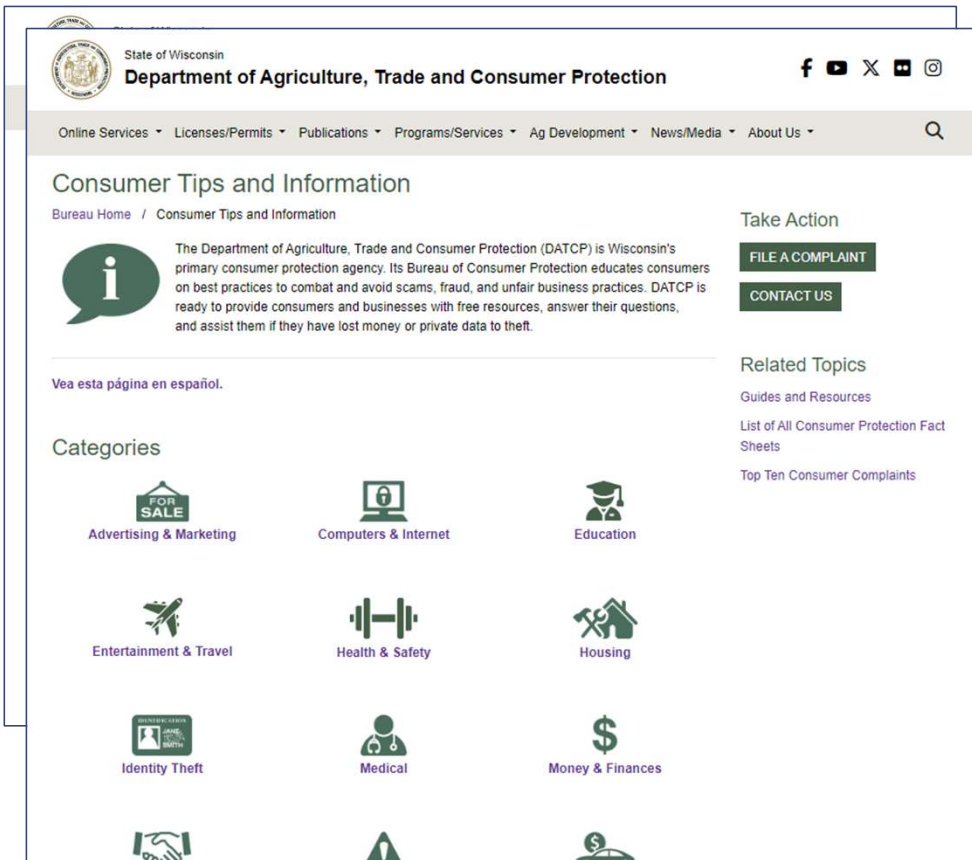
Planes de comida de puerta a puerta / Door-to-Door Food Plans	Español	English
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COMPRAS / SHOPPING

Clubes de Compras / Buying Clubs	Español	English
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Before...





...After



CONSUMER PROTECTION FACT SHEETS



Creating Strong Passwords

Passwords are the first line of defense in protecting you against cyber criminals (hackers) while conducting online transactions (i.e. banking, paying bills, or making purchases). If hackers gain unauthorized access to your computer, they can view your personal information; impersonate you and send messages to your friends; change your password to block you from accessing your own account; steal your identity; or infect your files with viruses. Therefore, it is vital to pick strong passwords that are different for each of your accounts and to update your passwords regularly.

Update your passwords regularly.



Here are some tips that will help protect your online transactions:

Use a unique password for each of your important accounts like email and online banking

Choosing the same password for each of your online accounts is like using the same key to lock your home, car and office – if a criminal gains access to one, all three are compromised and can lead to identity theft. Do not use the same password for an online newsletter that you use for your email or bank account. It may be less convenient, but picking multiple passwords keeps you safer.

Create a strong password by combining numbers, letters and symbols

Strong passwords are easy to remember but hard to guess. Make your password strong to help keep your information safe. Adding numbers, symbols and mixed-case letters makes it harder for cyber criminals or others to guess your password. Do not use obvious passwords like "123456" or "password," and avoid using publicly available information like your phone number or the name of a pet, a child or another familiar person. Likewise, avoid things that can be looked up, such as your birthday or ZIP code.

Longer = stronger. Your passwords should be a minimum of 8 characters, but the longer you can make them, the harder it will be for a thief to crack your codes. While it is best to avoid using real words as part of your password, if you do, you can try substituting characters for some of the letters, e.g. \$ for an S, or a zero for an O. Another way would be to insert a string of characters or numbers in the middle of a real word, thus breaking it up into two non-words.

Try using a phrase that only you know

You could start with "My friends Mary and Jack send me a funny text message every day" and then use numbers and letters to recreate it into this: **MfM&Jsmfmded** – a password with many variations that will be hard for cybercriminals to figure out. Another example would be something like **lam;)2bh!** – this has 9 characters and says "I am happy to be here!" Come up with a system to create your own passphrases. That will make it easier to create new passwords as well as help you remember them.

Adding a cell phone number

Sometimes you can add a phone number to your profile to receive a code to reset your password via text message. Having a mobile phone number on your account is one of the easiest and most reliable ways to help keep your account safe.



Crear contraseñas fuertes

Las contraseñas son la primera línea de defensa contra los cibercriminales (hackers) al realizar transacciones en línea (bancarias, pagar cuentas, o hacer compras). Si los cibercriminales ganan acceso no autorizado a su computadora, ellos pueden ver su información personal, pretender que son usted y enviar mensajes a sus amigos, cambiar su contraseña y bloquearle el acceso a su propia cuenta, robar su identidad, o infectar sus archivos con virus. Por lo tanto, es importante escoger contraseñas fuertes que sean diferentes para cada una de sus cuentas y actualizar sus contraseñas regularmente.

Actualice sus contraseñas regularmente.



Aquí hay unos consejos que le ayudarán a proteger sus transacciones en Internet:

Utilice una contraseña exclusiva para cada una de sus cuentas importantes tales como correo electrónico y cuentas bancarias en línea

Tener la misma contraseña en cada una de sus cuentas en Internet es como usar la misma llave para su hogar, auto y oficina – si un criminal gana acceso a una, las tres están en peligro y puede llevar a robo de identidad. No utilice una misma contraseña para un boletín informativo en línea que sea la misma para su correo electrónico o su cuenta bancaria. Puede ser menos conveniente, pero utilizar múltiples contraseñas le mantendrá más seguro.

Genere una contraseña fuerte al combinar números, letras y símbolos

Las contraseñas fuertes son fáciles de recordar, pero difíciles de adivinar. Haga sus contraseñas fuertes para ayudarlo a mantener su información segura. Añadir números, símbolos y letras mayúsculas y minúsculas mezcladas hace más difícil para los cibercriminales o a otras personas el adivinar su contraseña. No utilice contraseñas obvias tales como "123456" o "contraseña", y evite utilizar información públicamente

disponible tal como su número de teléfono, el nombre de su mascota, un niño o alguna otra persona familiar. Asimismo, evite cosas que pueden ser averiguadas, tales como su fecha de nacimiento o código postal.

Largas = Fuertes. Sus contraseñas deben tener un mínimo de 8 caracteres, pero cuanto más larga pueda hacerla, más difícil será para un ladrón descifrar sus códigos. Mientras que es mejor evitar usar palabras reales como parte de su contraseña, si lo hace, usted puede intentar a reemplazar caracteres por algunas de las letras, como \$ por la letra S, o un cero por la letra O. Otra forma puede ser añadir una cadena de caracteres o números en medio de una palabra real, convirtiéndola en dos no-letras.

Trate de utilizar una frase que solo usted conoce

Puede empezar con "Mis amigos Mary y Jack me envían un texto gracioso a diario" y entonces utilice números y letras para recrearlo en algo similar a esto: **MaM&Jmeutgad** – una contraseña con muchas variaciones será difícil de descifrar para cibercriminales. Otro ejemplo sería algo como: **Ye;)deA!** – este tiene 9 caracteres que dice "¡Yo estoy feliz de estar aquí!" Elabore un sistema para crear sus propias frases de contraseñas. Esto hará más fácil crear contraseñas nuevas mismo tiempo de ayudarlo a recordarlas.



State of Wisconsin
Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

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File a Consumer Complaint

What You Should Do

Talk to the person who sold you the product or service. If this person cannot help you, speak with a supervisor, then the store manager or owner. Be calm, courteous and friendly. Do not threaten. Be specific about wanting replacement, a refund or repair.

If you are not satisfied, the faster you complain to us, the better your chances for a resolution. Include problem history with date and location of purchase, copies of all documents, and your work and home numbers.

What Happens to Your Complaint

Consumer Protection staff will contact the business. Although we cannot force a business to resolve a complaint, our contact with the company often results in a solution.

We will contact you, once we have reviewed your complaint, typically within a week of receiving your complaint.

Filing a Complaint Online

To file a general consumer complaint online, click here.

You can also file an online complaint for these specific consumer issues:

- door-to-door solicitations
- home improvement practices
- identity theft
- landlord/tenant practices

File a Complaint - Español

Presentar una Queja del Consumidor

Additional Resources

- "Filing a Complaint" fact sheet
- Identity theft complaints

Contact

Bureau of Consumer Protection
 2811 Agriculture Drive
 PO Box 8911
 Madison, WI 53708-8911
DATCPHotline@wisconsin.gov
 (800) 422-7128
 (608) 224-4677 Fax
 (608) 224-5058 TTY




State of Wisconsin
Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

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File a Consumer Complaint

Bureau Home / File a Consumer Complaint



The Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) is Wisconsin's primary consumer protection agency. Its Bureau of Consumer Protection educates consumers on best practices to combat and avoid scams, fraud, and unfair business practices. DATCP is ready to provide consumers and businesses with free resources, answer their questions, and assist them if they have lost money or private data to theft.

Take Action

[FILE COMPLAINT ONLINE](#)

[CONTACT US](#)

Related Topics

Consumer Protection Hotline

Other DATCP Complaint Forms

File a Weights and Measures Complaint

Ve esta página en español.

Before You File a Complaint

Talk or write to the person who sold you the product or service. If this person cannot help you, speak with a supervisor, manager, or owner. Be calm, courteous, and friendly. Do not threaten. Be specific about wanting a replacement, a refund, or a repair.

If you are not satisfied with the business's response, the faster you file a complaint with DATCP, the better your chances are for a resolution. Include problem history with date and location of purchase, copies of all documents, and your contact information.

File a Complaint

Consumers can file a complaint online or by mail.

[ONLINE CONSUMER COMPLAINT FORM](#)

- Complaint Form PDF

To submit a consumer complaint to DATCP by mail, download a general consumer complaint form or contact DATCP's Consumer Protection Hotline to request a form be mailed to you. Attach copies of all documentation that supports your complaint, such as receipts, invoices, contracts, canceled checks, advertisements/catalog pages, lease documents, telephone bills, etc. Mail the completed form and copies of relevant documents to:

DATCP Bureau of Consumer Protection



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Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

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File a Consumer Complaint

What You Should Do

Talk to the person who sold you the product or service. If this person cannot help you, speak with a supervisor, then the store manager or owner. Be calm, courteous and friendly. Do not threaten. Be specific about wanting replacement, a refund or repair.

If you are not satisfied, the faster you complain to us, the better your chances for a resolution. Include problem history with date and location of purchase, copies of all documents, and your work and home numbers.

What Happens to Your Complaint

Consumer Protection staff will contact the business. Although we cannot force a business to resolve a complaint, our contact with the company often results in a solution.

We will contact you, once we have reviewed your complaint, typically within a week of receiving your complaint.

Filing a Complaint Online

To file a general consumer complaint online, click here.

You can also file an online complaint for these specific consumer issues:

- door-to-door solicitations
- home improvement practices
- identity theft
- landlord/tenant practices

File a Complaint - Español

Presentar una Queja del Consumidor

Additional Resources

- "Filing a Complaint" fact sheet
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Presentar una Queja del Consumidor

La oficina / Presentar una queja del consumidor

Tome acción

PRESENTAR UNA QUEJA EN LÍNEA

CONTÁCTENOS

Temas relacionados

Línea directa de protección al consumidor

Otros formularios de queja de DATCP (información en inglés)

Presentar una queja de pesos y medidas (información en inglés)

El Departamento de Agricultura, Comercio y Protección al Consumidor (DATCP) es la principal agencia de protección al consumidor de Wisconsin. Su Oficina de Protección al Consumidor educa a los consumidores sobre las mejores prácticas para combatir y evitar estafas, fraudes y prácticas comerciales desleales. DATCP está listo para brindar a los consumidores y empresas recursos gratuitos, responder a sus preguntas y ayudarlos si han perdido dinero o datos privados debido al robo.

Access this page in English.

Antes de presentar una queja

Hable o escríbale a la persona que le vendió el producto o servicio. Si esta persona no puede ayudarlo, hable con un supervisor, gerente o propietario. Sea cortés, mantenga la tranquilidad, y sea amigable. No amenace. Sea específico acerca de que quiere obtener, ya sea un reemplazo, un reembolso o una reparación.

Si no está satisfecho con la respuesta de la empresa, cuanto más rápido presente una queja ante DATCP, mayores serán sus posibilidades de obtener una resolución. Incluya el historial de problemas con la fecha y el lugar de compra, copias de todos los documentos y su información de contacto.

Presentar una queja

Los consumidores pueden presentar una queja en línea o por correo.

PRESENTAR UNA QUEJA GENERAL DEL CONSUMIDOR EN LÍNEA

- Formulario de Queja (PDF)

Para enviar una queja del consumidor a DATCP por correo, descargue el formulario general de queja del consumidor. Alternativamente, comuníquese con la línea directa de Protección al Consumidor de DATCP por teléfono al (800) 422-7128 o por correo electrónico a DATCPHotline@wisconsin.gov para solicitar que le envíen un formulario por correo. Adjunte copias de toda la documentación que respalde su queja, como, por ejemplo: recibos, facturas, contratos, cheques cancelados, anuncios/páginas de catálogo, documentos de arrendamiento, facturas telefónicas, etc. Envíe el formulario completo y copias de los documentos relevantes a:

DATCP Bureau of Consumer Protection



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Consumer Guide

DATCP's Senior Guide has long been a trusted source of information on consumer issues and scams that Wisconsin's elderly residents face. The new DATCP Consumer Guide includes all information contained in previous editions of the Senior Guide as well as new topics, tips, and more.

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection's Consumer Guide is a trusted source of information on consumer issues and scams that the state's residents face every day. The Consumer Guide contains over 40 pages of information to help Wisconsin consumers navigate conflicts, identify scams, learn consumer tips, and more.

A number of scams are addressed in the guide including imposter scams, identity theft, international lottery fraud, "storm chaser" contractors, phishing, and work-at-home operations. The guide also includes general consumer protection topics such as landlord/tenant laws, how to file a complaint with DATCP, protecting personal and private information, and registering for the state's No Call Registry.

While a wide range of subjects are covered in the Consumer Guide, it is important to note that the content in each topic section is adapted from a longer, more comprehensive DATCP fact sheet. Those fact sheets are always available on the DATCP website in the Consumer Fact Sheets section.

For more information, contact the Bureau of Consumer Protection at (800) 422-7128 or DATCPHotline@wi.gov.

Download the Guide

DATCP's Consumer Guide is available as a free PDF download:

[DOWNLOAD CONSUMER GUIDE](#)

Note that the topics in the table of contents are links, making it easy to jump to a particular topic of interest within the Guide.




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Consumer Guides and Resources

Bureau Home / Consumer Guides and Resources

GUIDE The Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) publishes and maintains several guides to connect consumers with the information and resources they need. To learn more about landlord-tenant issues, who to contact with specific questions about hundreds of topics, or general consumer information, download a free PDF or request a physical copy by mail.

[FILE A COMPLAINT](#)
[CONTACT US](#)

[Vea esta página en español.](#)

Consumer Guide

DATCP's Consumer Guide is a trusted source of information on consumer issues and scams that the state's residents face every day. The Consumer Guide contains over 40 pages of information to help Wisconsin consumers navigate conflicts, identify scams, and find tips and best practices.

Learn how to identify and avoid imposter scams, identity theft, international lottery fraud, transient "storm chaser" repair contractors, phishing, fake employment opportunities, and more. The Consumer Guide also includes information on general consumer protection topics like rental housing, how and when to file a complaint with DATCP, protecting your personal and private information, and the Wisconsin Do Not Call Registry.

While a wide range of subjects are covered in the Consumer Guide, the content in each topic section is adapted from a longer, more comprehensive DATCP fact sheet. Specific fact sheets are available on DATCP's Consumer Tips and Information webpage.

[DOWNLOAD CONSUMER GUIDE](#)

Landlord-Tenant Guide

DATCP's Landlord-Tenant Guide answers common questions about the rights and responsibilities of landlords and tenants in simple language. The guide is intended to help both parties in rental agreements avoid common problems.

Take Action
[FILE A COMPLAINT](#)
[CONTACT US](#)

Related Topics
[Consumer Tips and Information](#)
[Do Not Call Registry](#)
[Identity Theft](#)
[Landlord-Tenant](#)
[Resources for Businesses](#)
[Top Ten Consumer Complaints](#)



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Guías y Recursos para el Consumidor

La oficina / Guías y recursos para el consumidor

El Departamento de Agricultura, Comercio y Protección al Consumidor (DATCP, por sus siglas en inglés) publica y mantiene varias guías para conectar a los consumidores con la información y los recursos que necesitan. Para obtener más información sobre cuestiones entre propietarios e inquilinos, a quién contactar si tiene preguntas específicas sobre cientos de temas o información general para el consumidor, descargue un documento en formato PDF gratuito o solicite una copia por correo.

[PRESENTE UNA QUEJEJA](#)

[CONTÁCTENOS](#)

Temas relacionados

- Consejos e información para el consumidor
- Registro de No Llamadas
- Robo de identidad
- Propietarios e inquilinos
- Las Diez Quejas de Mayor Incidencia

Access this page in English.

Guía del consumidor

La Guía del Consumidor de DATCP es una fuente confiable de información sobre los problemas y estafas de los consumidores que los residentes del estado enfrentan todos los días. La Guía del Consumidor contiene más de 40 páginas de información para ayudar a los consumidores de Wisconsin a navegar conflictos, identificar estafas y encontrar consejos y medidas a tomar.

Aprenda a identificar y evitar las estafas de impostores, robo de identidad, fraude de lotería internacional, contratistas de reparación transitorios, conocidos como "cazatormentas", phishing, las oportunidades de empleo falsas y más. La Guía del consumidor también incluye información sobre temas generales de protección del consumidor, como son las viviendas de alquiler, cómo y cuándo presentar una queja ante DATCP, protección de su información personal y privada y el Registro de No Llamadas de Wisconsin.

Si bien la Guía del Consumidor cubre una amplia gama de temas, el contenido de cada sección temática está adaptado de una hoja informativa de DATCP que contiene más información al respecto, toda la cual está disponible en la página web de Información y Consejos para el Consumidor de DATCP.

[DESCARGUE LA GUÍA DEL CONSUMIDOR](#)

Guía para propietarios e inquilinos

La Guía para propietarios e inquilinos de DATCP responde a preguntas comunes sobre los derechos y responsabilidades de propietarios e inquilinos en una manera sencilla. La guía tiene como objetivo ayudar a ambas



Wisconsin Consumer News

March 2024

National Consumer Protection Week

Help us celebrate! DATCP is Wisconsin's primary consumer protection agency. Its Bureau of Consumer Protection is responsible for regulating unfair business practices, addressing consumer complaints, and educating the public on consumer rights, scams and fraud, identity theft, and more.

For **National Consumer Protection Week** from March 4-8, 2023, tell your friends and family about DATCP's many free resources such as the Consumer Guide, which contains over 40 pages of tips and information on dozens of topics like scams and fraud, identity theft, and home improvements, as well as landlord-tenant laws, how to file a complaint with DATCP, and the state's Do Not Call Registry.

- The Bureau of Consumer Protection: ConsumerProtection.wi.gov.
- DATCP's Consumer Guide: ConsumerGuide.wi.gov.
- The Landlord Tenant Guide: LandlordTenant.wi.gov.
- Wisconsin Do Not Call Registry: NoCall.wi.gov.
- Attend or request a free [consumer protection presentation](#).
- Read Governor Evers' National Consumer Protection Week [proclamation](#).

Recent DATCP News and Alerts

Read DATCP's latest news releases and consumer alerts.



Top Ten Consumer Complaints Reported to DATCP in 2023

DATCP receives thousands of complaints, inquiries, and reports from consumers every year on a variety of issues. Learn how to identify, prevent, and respond to 2023's most common consumer complaint topics.

DATCP Settles with Dollar General for Price Accuracy Violations

After 238 inspections by DATCP and municipal inspectors at Dollar General stores last year, the Department reached a major settlement with the company to resolve 662 alleged violations of price accuracy laws and 53 alleged violations of refund policy disclosure laws. 9% of the 7,344 inspected products resulted in overcharges that were 17% higher on average than the shelf price.



"The accuracy of prices on store shelves is among the most basic and essential protections consumers have," said DATCP Secretary Randy Romanski. "Consumers should be able to trust that the prices advertised to them are accurate, and they have a right to be informed of the laws protecting them."

If a customer is overcharged for an item, Wisconsin law requires that merchants using electronic price scanner systems refund at least the difference between the posted price and the price charged at point of sale. These merchants are legally required to inform customers of this law by posting a sign in a conspicuous manner.

Read more from DATCP's [news release](#).

Scam Spotlight: Fake QR Codes



You're seeing it more and more every day: Companies use QR codes to point consumers to their apps, track packages, or view restaurant menus. You may have recently used one to pay for public parking, get into a concert or sporting event, or even board a flight. They are useful and popular, but these codes have also become a way for scammers to disguise malicious links.

One common method scammers use is placing QR code stickers over the top of honest QR codes – this makes it appear legitimate to the consumer and can be very difficult to detect. Another method is texting or emailing you a code and making up an urgent reason for you to scan it. They may claim they couldn't deliver your

A newsletter for consumers and supporting organizations.



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ISSUES IMPACTING VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

- **Aging Populations**
 - A.I. presents new scams and vulnerabilities
- **Military and Veterans**
 - Commonly targeted for fraud
- **Historically Underserved Communities**
 - Engagement with Chambers of Commerce and Community-based Organizations
- **Students / Younger Populations**
 - Collaboration with DFI to proactively educate about scams and best practices related to student loan debt
 - Bookmark campaign



2023 – WORKING TOGETHER TO BRIDGE THE GAPS

- Hold future conferences
- **Create a consumer protection newsletter**
- Create a consumer protection listserv
- Learn from others' success (ex. Milwaukee's program)
- Consumer Roundtable (i.e. WisPIRG)
- Provide examples of real issues and actions taken
- Create talking points on the issues, beyond the press releases
- Create awareness of offerings provided by other partners (i.e. resource sharing)
- Celebrate/Leverage National Consumer Protection Week to come together
- Gain knowledge of communities and compositions
 - Issues impacting communities
 - Impact of issues on communities
 - Tailor messaging to communities and services
- Work with media (in communities)
- Work directly with communities



CONSUMER PROTECTION

SAMPLES FROM THE PRESENTATIONS: LANDLORD TENANT, IDENTITY THEFT & COMMON SCAMS & FRAUDS



COMMON LANDLORD TENANT COMPLAINTS

- Failure to return security deposit
- Inadequate disclosures
- Eviction
- Unauthorized entry
- Mold damage
- Unsatisfactory Service



SECURITY DEPOSITS

- Check-In Procedures
- Returning Deposits
- Withholding
 - Statement of Claims
 - Forwarding Addresses

SECURITY DEPOSIT RECEIPT

Personal Information

Name (Last)	(First)	(Middle Initial)	Home Telephone
Address (Mailing Address)	(City)	(State)	(Zip)
E-Mail Address			Other Telephone



DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS

- Code violations
- Habitability Issues
- Utility charges
- Landlord and authorized agents



EVICCTIONS

Terminating a Tenancy

- Allowable Reasons
- Notice is required (5 day / 14 day)
- Evictions Action (§799.44)



IDENTITY THEFT

- What it is
- How does it happen
- How to spot it
- How to protect yourself
- What to do if you're a victim



WHAT DO THEY WANT?

Name in combination with:

- **Date of birth**
- Address
- Email
- Phone number
- Driver's license number
- Credit card numbers
- **Social Security number**
- Pin numbers
- Passwords
- Bank account numbers
- Passport number
- Biometric Data



HOW IT HAPPENS

Low Tech:

- Dumpster diving
- Stolen mail
- Stolen wallet or phone



High Tech:

- Phishing scams
- Data breaches
- Social networking



PREVENTION BASICS – IDENTITY THEFT

- Use a Micro-Cut shredder
- Go to the Post Office
- Enable two-factor authentication (2FA)
- Sign up for **eNotify** from Wisconsin DOT
- Sign up for Informed Delivery® by USPS®
- Sign up for IRS.gov Identity Protection PIN
- Use strong passwords
- Check Credit reports
- Credit freeze



IDENTITY THEFT WARNING SIGNS

- Unauthorized debit and credit charges
- Unsolicited credit cards in the mail
- Unsolicited change of address
- Earning Statement / W-2
- Explanation of benefits



IDENTITY THEFT AND SCAMS COEXIST



SCAMS: STATISTICS - FTC DATA BOOK - 2023

**Younger people
reported losing
money to fraud
more often than
older people.**

44%

Age 20-29

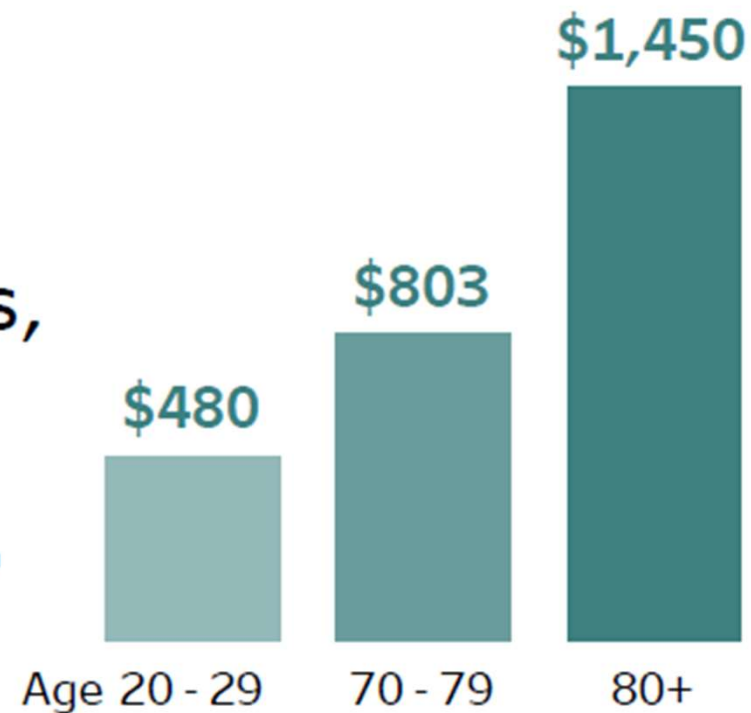
25%

Age 70-79



SCAMS: STATISTICS - FTC DATA BOOK - 2023

But when people aged 70+ had a loss, the median loss was much higher.



SCAMS: STATISTICS - FTC

Scammers contacting people by phone or on social led to big losses

Phone calls:

Highest **per person**
reported losses



\$1,480
median loss

Social media:

Highest **overall**
reported losses



\$1.4 billion
total lost

Email:

Highest
of reports



358,000
reports



SCAM TRENDS: PHONE

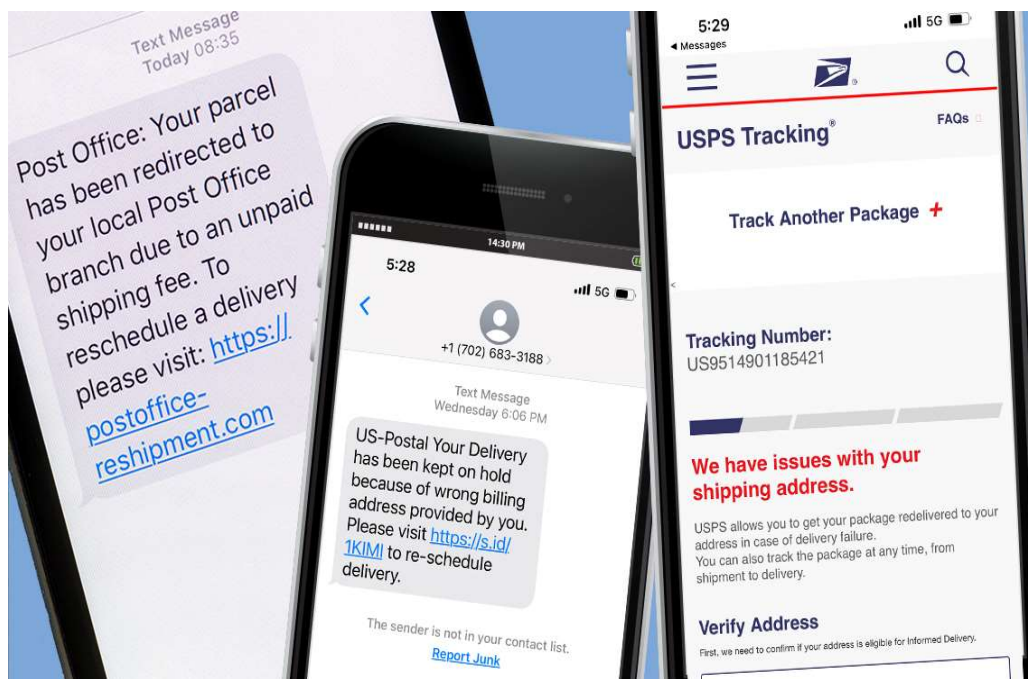


Phone

- Caller ID
 - Spoofing
- Robocalls
 - Don't press any buttons
- “Can you hear me?”
- Do Not Call List



SCAM TRENDS: TEXT/EMAIL



Text/Email

- Malicious Links
- Hidden Sender
- Hacked Accounts
- Fake Phone Numbers




GOVERNMENT IMPOSTER SCAMS

Social Security

Transcription Beta

"This call is from the Department of Social Security administration the reason you have _____ call from our department is to inform you that we just suspend your Social Security number because we found some suspicious activity so if you want to know about this case just press one thank you..."

Was this transcription [useful](#) or [not useful](#)?

 0:00 -0:22

[Speaker](#) [Call Back](#) [Delete](#)

IRS

- Unpaid taxes
- Demand immediate payment

Medicare

- Expiring benefits
- Info/bank verification

Law Enforcement/FBI

- Warrant for arrest
- Demand payment for fines



UTILITY IMPOSTER SCAMS

Water, Gas, Electric, Telecommunications:

- Threaten to cut off service
 - “Crew is on the way”
- Ask victim to “verify” account information
 - Personal info
 - Payment/Banking info
- Demand payment often by unusual methods
 - Prepaid debit card or cryptocurrency.



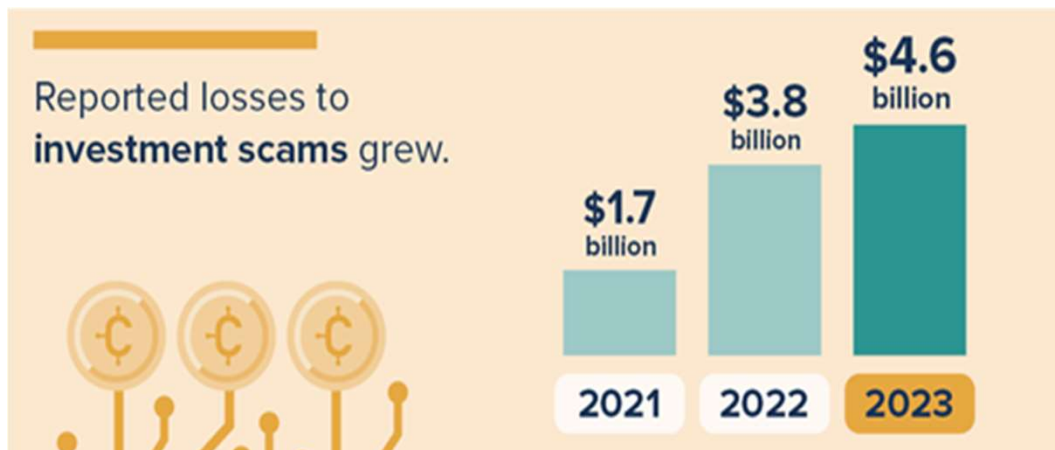
TECH SUPPORT

Starts with a phone call or pop-up window

- Computer is infected with a virus, call this 1-800-number
- Request remote access to victim's computer
 - Install Malware, Ransomware, Etc...
- Offer fake anti-virus coverage
 - \$500+/year
 - Recurring bills



INVESTMENT SCAMS



[Dfi.wi.gov](https://dfi.wi.gov)

(608) 261-9555



State of Wisconsin

Department of Financial Institutions

Pig Butchering

\$75 Billion in 2023 worldwide

AARP Report

95% of Investment Scams involve
Cryptocurrency

Only invest with someone you know
& trust



VICTIM OF A SCAM

- Don't be ashamed to report falling for a scam
- If you mailed money or gift cards, contact USPS as soon as possible
- Report to law enforcement
- Notify financial institution
- WI Bureau of Consumer Protection



HOW CAN WE COLLABORATE?



KEY RESOURCES

- DATCP.WI.GOV
- ConsumerProtection.wi.gov
 - LandlordTenant.wi.gov
 - ConsumerGuide.wi.gov
 - Identity Theft Resources
 - Complaint Portal & Forms
 - Fact Sheets
- **Hotline**
 - (800) 422-7128
 - DATCPHotline@Wisconsin.Gov



WORKING TOGETHER TO PROTECT WISCONSIN CONSUMERS

2024



**Wisconsin Department of Agriculture,
Trade and Consumer Protection**

Bureau of Consumer Protection

2811 Agriculture Drive, PO Box 8911

Madison, WI 53708-8911

Website: datcp.wi.gov

Email: DATCPHotline@wisconsin.gov

Phone: [\(800\) 422-7128](tel:(800)422-7128)

TTY: [\(608\) 224-5058](tel:(608)224-5058)





X (formerly Twitter)
@widadtcp

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Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP)

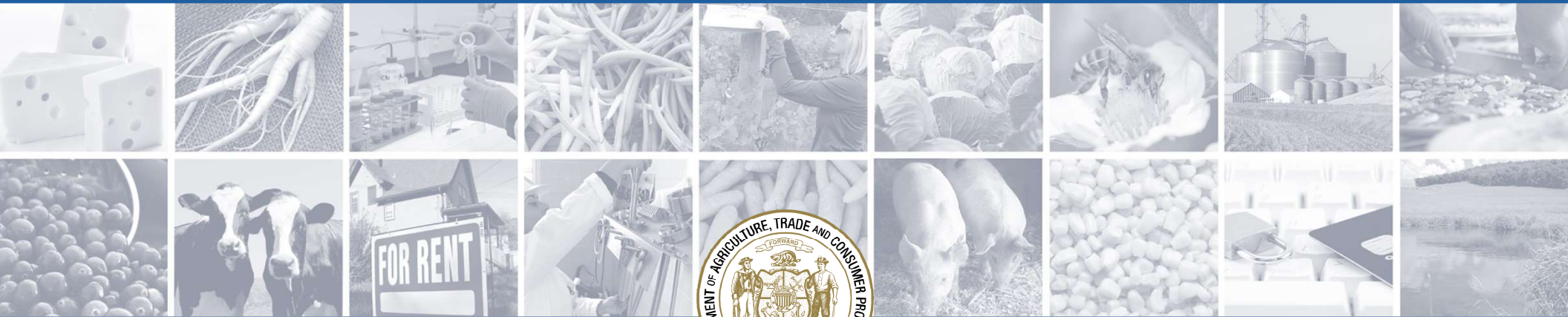


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@wisdatcp



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May 23, 2024