



The Equifax data breach will affect millions of consumers, and Wisconsin's banking industry stands ready to assist their customers. It is the banks in Wisconsin and across the nation that shield their customers from the financial harm caused by data breaches. It is as simple as this: when a breach occurs, banks often bear the brunt of the costs so their customers won't have to.

"Have I been compromised?" is the biggest question on consumers' minds. The Wisconsin Bankers Association offers the following tips for consumers who are not sure if their information has been compromised, as well as steps for consumers who know their information was stolen:

Not sure if your information has been compromised?

1. Visit www.equifaxsecurity2017.com, an online service Equifax has set up, to check if your information has been compromised. Please note that Equifax had an arbitration clause buried in its terms of service barring those who enrolled in the Equifax checker program from participating in any class-action lawsuits that may arise from the incident. This has changed. According to the company the arbitration clause will not apply in this matter.
2. Check all of your accounts via online services provided by your bank or credit card provider. If you don't have access to or haven't set up an online account, you can call the company directly for assistance in reviewing your accounts. Consumers should be looking for any discrepancies in their purchasing habits. **Be sure to do this over the next few months! Just because the bad guys have your information now, it doesn't mean they will use it immediately.**
3. Monitor your accounts closely and frequently. Balance your checkbook monthly and match credit card statements with receipts. By viewing accounts online and checking throughout the month, you'll be able to identify possible problems sooner.
4. Review your credit report every three or four months. You are entitled to one free credit report from each of the three major credit bureaus per year. Request a single report from one of the bureaus every three or four months at www.annualcreditreport.com. By staggering these requests, you will be able to monitor your credit throughout the year.
5. Register for [eNotify from the Wisconsin Department of Motor Vehicles](#). This service, among other things, will allow you to set up alerts confirming transactions regarding your drivers license. If you didn't request the transaction, this serves as an early alert system that someone is making unauthorized changes.

You know your information has been compromised:

1. Contact the security departments of your creditors or bank to close the compromised account(s). Explain that you are a victim of identity theft and this particular card or account has been compromised. Ask them to provide documentation that the account has been closed. You should also follow up with a letter to the agency documenting your request.
2. Contact the three major credit bureaus (Experian, Trans Union and Equifax) via phone immediately to request a fraud alert be placed on your file. Once again, explain that you are a victim of identity theft and ask that they grant no new credit without your approval. Again, follow up with a letter to the agency documenting your request.
3. File a report with your local police department and request a copy of the report. This is good documentation to have on hand to prove your identity has been stolen as you begin the process of restoring your credit and good name.
4. Document all of your actions and keep copies of everything.

Whether you are sure or unsure your financial information has been compromised, one of your first calls should be to your bank. Your bank has a variety of resources available for customers that can help with situations like these. Their staff are also knowledgeable and more than willing to help.