

## **Data Breaches and Identity Theft**

It may be a surprise to you, but the US Government has lost more personal information than any business in the United States, an estimated 244.5 million records. The Office of Personnel Management had 3 major breaches, two after they were told to tighten up their security. That dwarfs the Equifax breach where 143 million records were exposed.



There is a very good possibility that your personal information has been stolen and is available on the “Dark Web”. The question is not if, but when will you be a victim and in what manner.

There are several things you should do on many different levels. Make a list of everything you login to that has personal information. Just write down the names of the businesses. Then analyze your need. If you don’t need access to one of those businesses, end the relationship.

Next, using that list, change all your passwords and save that list, you will need it again in a few months when you change all the passwords again.

After that you need to make sure all the PCs and networks you have control of are secure. We can help you with that, but the basics are make sure all PCs have quality Anti-Virus, that you are using one of the filtering DNS servers, like Quad-9’s or Norton’s ConnectSafe (personal use only). Finally make sure that you have a good firewall on your network based on information you are protecting.

You’ve heard about LifeLock, the most advertised Identity protection service, but there are others as good or better. Identity protection is a huge business and growing. Equifax and Experian now have Identification Protection Services that are free or inexpensive and compete well with LifeLock. Further you can freeze your credit information so no new accounts can be opened in your name. If you are unfamiliar with this, it’s worth doing some on-line research.

What can we do to help?

We can help with choosing, installing and maintaining a boundary firewall.

We can provide managed Anti-Virus and Patch management.

We can provide cost effective backup solutions for you and your business.

We can run security analysis on your networks to make sure they are safe.