
INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Ministry of Justice
Consumer Protection BC
Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner for B.C.

There's an app for that: privacy, security and your smartphone

VICTORIA – While the clunky mobile devices and car phones of the 90s may have disappeared, the advances of smartphone technology in the 21st century have created new challenges when it comes to protecting personal information.

To mark March as Fraud Prevention Month – a month-long national initiative that helps Canadians recognize, prevent and report fraudulent activities – the Ministry of Justice, Consumer Protection BC, and the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner for B.C. have teamed up to share important information about privacy and security for smartphones.

YOU ARE A TARGET FOR SMARTPHONE FRAUD IF...

Your smartphone is your other half.

Tips to lessen the risk:

- Limit the personal information you store on your mobile device to what is absolutely necessary, as mobile phones and tablets are prone to loss or theft.
- Don't send personal data over public wireless networks as they may or may not be secure.
- Make yourself aware of privacy controls available through your service provider, online account settings or mobile applications.

You use your birthday as your password.

Tips to lessen the risk:

- Weak passwords are easy to crack. Secure your smartphone with a hard-to-guess password – use a combination of letters, numbers and special characters to keep would-be fraudsters out.
- Set the automatic lock feature so a password is required to unlock your device and access information.

You aren't too concerned about smartphone data theft.

Tips to lessen the risk:

- Attacks on mobile devices are on the rise. Consider using encryption technology and install and run anti-virus and anti-spyware software on your mobile device for added protection.
- Ensure that personal data stored on your old smartphone is purged prior to disposal.

Learn More:

- If you have questions about your rights and responsibilities as a consumer in British Columbia, please contact Consumer Protection BC toll free at 1 888 564-9963 or visit: www.consumerprotectionbc.ca
- For more information about Fraud Prevention Month, visit: www.competitionbureau.gc.ca/eic/site/cb-bc.nsf/eng/h_00122.html

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