

## Equifax Messed Up – Who Pays? You Do ←

In the days since the credit reporting agency Equifax disclosed the breach of 143 million consumers' private financial data, howls of outrage have only grown louder.

Dozens of potential class-action lawsuits have been filed, Congress has revved up hearings on the breach, and two legislators have promised bills targeting the credit reporting industry. For its part, Equifax is offering consumers a free credit freeze and one year of credit monitoring to compensate for a breach that permanently increases their risk of identity theft.

But consumers whose Social Security number or credit card information has been exposed can't wait for reforms or depend on a limited monitoring service. Even those not affected by the breach should proceed as if they were: It's just one of 313 hacking or unintentional disclosures so far this year as tracked by the Privacy Rights Clearinghouse.

Assume thieves have your information. Your chance to limit their ability to use it depends not on Equifax or Congress, but on what you do.

### Don't rely on a system that has already failed

Credit bureaus collect data on how you've repaid debts you've incurred. They make money by selling that information to creditors who use it to see if they want to do business with you. The data they collect include birth dates, addresses, driver's license numbers and even Social Security numbers — the skeleton keys to your financial life.

You can't avoid the three major credit bureaus if you use credit cards or have loans. Nor do you get a say in how the bureaus will protect your data or what the remedies will be if your information is compromised.

"We are the commodity, not the customer," says attorney Chi Chi Wu of the National Consumer Law Center. "We can't decide, 'Oh, I don't want to deal with Equifax, so just send my data to the other credit bureaus.' We don't get to decide which credit bureaus we want to deal with."

Even taking the available steps now to protect your credit records is no guarantee.

"You should cross your fingers that the bureau system that was unable to protect your information in the past will do so in the future via that bureau's freeze, lock, monitoring or ID theft protection programs," says Barry Paperno, who blogs at Speaking of Credit.

### What to do after the Equifax wake-up call

There's no substitute for your own vigilance in checking your financial statements and credit records and acting immediately to limit the damage. Assume that your information is out there and that a criminal can get it.

### Watch your credit card accounts for suspect charges

Even if your data weren't compromised in this breach, identity thieves are always at work.

Don't wait for your monthly statement to arrive; fraudulent charges may pile up before you notice. Check your accounts online frequently or set an alert to notify you whenever a charge above a set amount is made. You can challenge fraudulent credit charges, but your best protection from liability depends on alerting your issuer in a timely fashion.

### Monitor your credit scores and reports

You also need to watch for signs that someone has opened new accounts using your data. Regularly check your credit scores for unexplained movements and your credit reports for accounts you don't recognize.

You can do this yourself; many personal finance websites and some credit card issuers offer free scores and credit report information you can access anytime. Look for one that sends alerts when new accounts are opened, when your score changes and so on.

### Decide how to secure your credit data

A credit freeze offers the best firewall against your data being misused because it restricts access to your records. It can cost up to \$10 per bureau, and you also have to pay to lift the freeze later if you want to apply for new credit.

While Equifax is covering the cost of credit freezes and monitoring of its own records, it's not doing the same for freezes and monitoring through the other major credit bureaus, TransUnion and Experian.

Fraud alerts offer less protection, merely flagging lenders and card issuers that credit applications should receive extra scrutiny. In most cases, a lender will contact you to verify a credit application. The service is free, but most alerts last only 90 days unless you renew them.

All three credit bureaus have some sort of "credit lock" service, and they may offer these as an alternative when you try to freeze your credit. It's easier to lift a lock when you want to apply for credit, but locks don't block access as thoroughly as a freeze. Your data can be accessed by businesses that want to screen you for promotional offers, for instance.

And all three bureaus' terms of service require you to waive your right to participate in a class-action lawsuit and use arbitration instead. Cost varies, from free to more than \$20 a month, but you may be able to lock all three bureaus with one service.

### Learn more about protecting your credit

- How to freeze your credit, and why you might want to
- How to dispute fraudulent charges on your credit card
- Should you buy credit and identity theft monitoring?

Bev O'Shea is a writer at NerdWallet.

The article Equifax Messed Up — Who Pays? You Do originally appeared on NerdWallet.

## Wisconsin Rapids Office

1610 Lincoln Street • Wisconsin Rapids WI 54494 • phone 715.421.1610

## Plover Office

1760 Plover Road • Plover WI 54467 • phone 715.344.7440

## We Offer GAP – For the Unexpected

Guaranteed Asset Protection (GAP) is a voluntary program that we offer for your new or used vehicle loan. This financial protection covers the difference in the balance on a car and its declared value, as determined by your primary insurance carrier, in the event that it is damaged beyond repair or stolen and never recovered. GAP is a supplemental coverage and does not replace your standard Comprehensive, Collision and Liability coverage, only enhances them.

No matter how terrific a car is, the minute you drive it out of the show room it is worth less. Depending on where you live, the established market value could be less than the actual balance you owe on your car. With GAP, if your car is a loss, the deficiency will be covered. That includes the difference between the market value of the car and the loan balance, less delinquent payments late charges, refundable warranties, and other insurance related charges. It will also cover the insurance deductible up to \$1,000 if a deficiency exists.

Consider; you buy a car. The loan balance after one year is \$15,000. The market value is \$11,000. Your insurance deductible is \$1,000. You total the car, and your insurance company pays \$10,000. That leaves a difference of \$5,000. \$5,000 you would have to pay for a car that you no longer have! With GAP, that \$5,000 is paid. Think about it!

When you are applying for your next auto loan, ask about GAP. If you have any questions, please call your MACU loan office. We'll be happy to explain.



## INACTIVE AND DORMANT ACCOUNTS

The Credit Union has a number of accounts which have been inactive for a substantial length of time. In many cases we have not received a change of address, and in some cases a member is deceased with no living relatives or "payable on death" instructions. After a certain period of inactivity when we do not know the whereabouts of the member, we are required to send any unclaimed funds to the state.

These accounts incur a cost to the Credit Union (and ultimately the entire membership) in the form of postage and production costs for mailing statements, computer software costs based on the number of open accounts, and especially in the risk of fraud on accounts that have not been used regularly. In order to minimize the financial risks to the Credit Union and the costs of maintaining these accounts, a dormant account fee is assessed on these inactive accounts.

The dormant and inactive account fee is assessed on the accounts of those members who are 18 years of age or older, have less than a minimum balance of \$100, AND have had no activity on the entire account/base number (savings, loan, CD, share draft/checking, or credit card) for 365 days or more. ALL these conditions must be met for an account to be deemed inactive and have the fee assessed. The monthly dormancy fee is currently \$5.00, and is assessed at month end.

Avoid the fee! Be an active member. After all, you own it!

In the event that we charge your account in error, please bring it to our attention and we will gladly refund you the inactivity fee.

### ANOTHER BENEFIT OF MEMBERSHIP FROM



#### THREE GREAT WAYS MEMBERSHIP PAYS WITH SPRINT®

It's Sprint's best Credit Union Member Cash Rewards offer ever!

Looking for a great plan and a little extra cash? [CREDIT UNION] members can tap into the Sprint Unlimited Plan and these amazing cash rewards.

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2. Current Sprint customers get a **\$50 cash reward** for **every new line** transferred into Sprint Credit Union Member Cash Rewards.
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Plus, enjoy Sprint's reliability, which now beats T-Mobile and performs within 1% of AT&T & Verizon\*. You can also enjoy a great price for fully featured Unlimited.

#### Get started today!

- Become a Sprint customer and mention you're a credit union member
- Register at [LoveMyCreditUnion.org/SprintRewards](http://LoveMyCreditUnion.org/SprintRewards) or in the Love My Credit Union® Rewards app
- Allow up to six to eight weeks to see cash rewards directly deposited into your credit union account

Get all the BENefits of credit union membership. Sign up today!

#### LEGAL: FPO

\*Claim based on Sprint's analysis of latest Nielsen drive test data for average network reliability (voice & data) in top 106 markets.



## Focus on... **KAITLIN LEPAK**

Kaitlin Lepak started her career with Members' Advantage Credit Union as a part time Member Services Representative in our Plover office in August of 2016. In June of 2017 Kaitlin was promoted to a fulltime Financial Services Representative position in the Wisconsin Rapids office.

Kaitlin graduated from Edgar High School in 2012. After graduation she attended UW-Marshfield for three semesters pursuing a degree in physical therapy. She then transferred to UW Stevens Point for one semester and after that moved back home to Edgar to attend NTC to earn her EMT certification.

Kaitlin's family consists of her parents, one older brother, 2 younger sisters, a sister-in-law, a brother-in-law, 1 nephew, 1 niece and the family puppy, Bailey.

Kaitlin enjoys bowling and in the winter she is on a couple's league as well as a women's league. She also gets home to Edgar every chance she gets and enjoys camping, watching her youngest sister compete in sports, watching football or just playing with her niece and nephew.

Look for Kaitlin at the MSR desk in the Rapids office to open a new account, do a transaction or just to say hi! She is always ready to help!



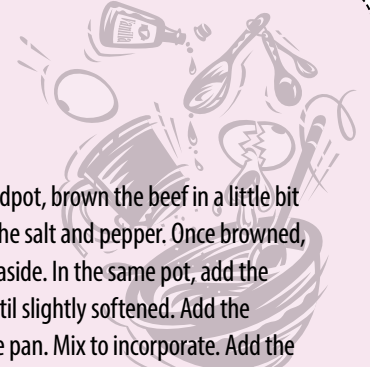
### **Chili**

#### **Ingredients:**

Drizzle of olive Oil  
1 lb of ground beef  
2 tsp of pepper  
2 tsp of salt  
1 large onion, chopped  
30 oz can of kidney beans  
28 oz can of crushed tomato  
2 Tbsp of cumin  
1 Tbsp of paprika  
1 Tbsp of red pepper flakes  
8 Tbsp of chili powder  
¼ Cup of water  
14.9 fl oz of stout beer  
Shredded cheddar cheese  
Sour cream  
Chopped chives

#### **Directions:**

In a large heavy bottomed pot, brown the beef in a little bit of olive oil. Season with the salt and pepper. Once browned, remove the beef and set aside. In the same pot, add the chopped onions. Cook until slightly softened. Add the browned beef back to the pan. Mix to incorporate. Add the kidney beans, crushed tomato, cumin, paprika, red pepper flakes, chili powder, water and stout beer. Give it stir. Bring to a boil. Cover and let it simmer for an hour. Serve with shredded cheddar, sour cream and chives. Enjoy!



*Are you traveling and plan on using your Members' Advantage Credit Union Debit or Credit Card?*

*Please make sure to call us at 715-421-1610 to let us know where and when you will be traveling, so you can enjoy your trip with no interruptions.*

Members' Advantage will once again be collecting a small donation or non-perishable food items for our local food bank, in exchange for our 2018 calendars. Calendars will be available after Thanksgiving.

## **MACU EMPLOYEE PROMOTIONS**

### **Jennifer Kraus**

\*\*Promoted from part time Member Services Rep to full time General Office Clerk in the Accounting Department

### **Kaitlin Lepak**

\*\*Promoted from part time Members Services Rep in the Plover office to full time Financial Services Rep in the Wisconsin Rapids office

### **Kelly Shay**

\*\*Promoted from full time Financial Services Rep to Consumer Loan Officer

### **Rachael Dobbs**

\*\*Promoted from part time Member Services Rep to part time Loan Clerk

### **Kristal Brown**

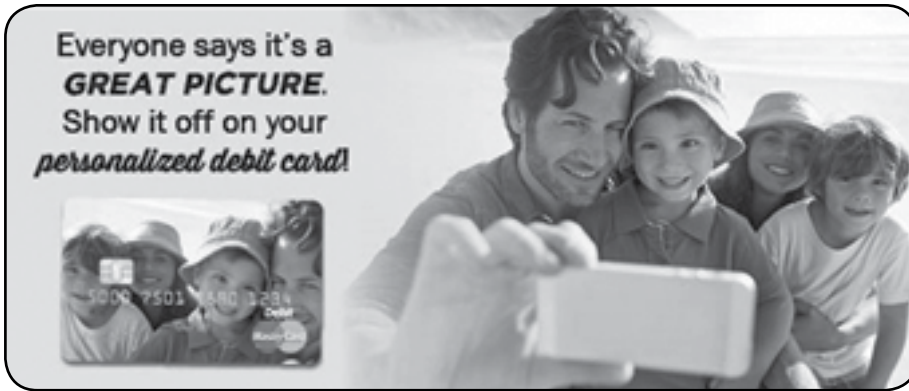
\*\*Promoted from part time Member Services Rep to full time Member Services Rep



**NCUA**

*"We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give."*

—Winston Churchill



Get a personalized debit card today by visiting our debit card page at  
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## savings corner

**Open Deposit**  
.20% APY\*

**Share Certificate**  
(\$1,000 minimum deposit)

6 month term	.65% APY*
12 month term	1.00% APY*
18 month term	1.10% APY*
24 month term	1.30% APY*
30 month term	1.35% APY*
36 month term	1.55% APY*
48 month term	1.75% APY*
60 month term	2.05% APY*

**IRA Share Certificates**  
**Traditional/Roth/Health Savings**  
**and Education SAs**

(\$1,000 minimum deposit)

12 month term	1.00% APY*
18 month term	1.10% APY*
24 month term	1.30% APY*
30 month term	1.35% APY*
36 month term	1.55% APY*
48 month term	1.75% APY*
60 month term	2.05% APY*

**IRA Passbook**  
.40% APY\*

**Money Market Sharedraft**  
(\$1,000 minimum deposit)  
From 0.10% - .30% APY\*

Rates are subject to change.  
\*APY=Annual percentage Yield

## office hours

### WISCONSIN RAPIDS

7:00-5:00 M-W Drive-up  
7:00-6:00 Th-F Drive-up  
9:00-5:00 M-F Lobby  
9:00-1:00 Sat. Drive-up Only

### PLOVER

7:00-5:00 M-W Drive-up  
7:00-6:00 Th-F Drive-up  
9:00-5:00 M-W Lobby  
9:00-6:00 Th-F Lobby  
9:00-1:00 Sat. Drive-up Only

### 24 hr Drive-up ATM

No Surcharge for Members  
using a MACU debit card.

**CLOSED:**

Thanksgiving Day, November 23, 2017  
Christmas Day, December 25, 2017  
New Year's Day, January 1, 2018