



For immediate release

THIS COULD BE YOU!

SPRING CLEANING COULD COST YOU YOUR LIFE

Women are being warned to think first before spring cleaning their wallets, wardrobes and homes this year or run the risk of losing their identity.

Recent survey data¹ shows that women (73%) are more likely than men (64%) to put themselves at risk of identity fraud by throwing out their personal information such as credit card statements and expired I.D cards in their rubbish and recycling.

It's not surprising then that Australian women are also more worried about identity fraud with 64% saying they are extremely or very concerned about unauthorised access to or misuse of their personal data compared with 55% of their male counterparts².

The first ever ABS study on personal fraud released in June, found that Identity fraud has become the fastest growing crime in Australia with 500,000 victims in the past 12 months at an estimated cost of \$1 billion to the economy³.

Identity theft accounted for 124,000 victims of identity fraud. These victims included those who experienced unauthorised use of their personal details, such as a driver's licence, tax file number, or passport through fraudulent or forged identification documents, or unauthorised appropriation of their identity through any other means to conduct business, open accounts or take out loans illegally in their name⁴.

A further 383,300 (or 77%) were a victim of credit or bank card fraud who experienced at least one unauthorised, fraudulent transaction using their cards or account details⁴.

National Identity Fraud Awareness Week is in its second year and will be held from October 13 -17 2008, and aims to build awareness of identity fraud and educate people on how they can protect themselves against it.

Peter Campbell, National Marketing Manager from Fellowes, says there are some basic tips on how people can protect their identity.

“All it takes is one piece of identification to be stolen and identity thieves can then create new forms of ID, access your bank accounts, steal your tax refunds and rack up huge credit card bills.

ENDS

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Sources:

- ¹ Fellowes (2008), Newspoll Survey, Australia - ID Fraud Awareness
- ² Unisys Security Index (2008) Newspoll Survey, Australia
- ³ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2007) Personal Fraud Survey, Australia
- ⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2007) Personal Fraud Survey, Australia