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## Online Security

Did you know that since February, there have already been 140 data breaches which compromised almost 33 million consumers? For this reason, staying diligent on your cyber-safety is of the utmost importance.

**Passwords** remain the most vulnerable to cybercriminals. According to the Verizon Data Breach Investigations Report, 81% of hacking related breaches were made possible due to weak or stolen passwords. Here are some tips to try to make your passwords stronger: make them longer and use passphrases, instead of passwords, that include a mix of letters—upper and lower case, numbers, and symbols; with no ties to your personal information or words found in a dictionary (i.e., i<3MyB@nK!).

You should also use a different password for all the sites and apps you're signed up for, keeping your financial institution logins separate from any other online banking password you might use. There are only so many combinations of letters and numbers you can hold in your head at once. If you must write them down, store your passwords in safe place—locked away in a desk or file cabinet when not in use, away from family, cleaning staff, visitors, and others.

**Hardware and Software** also need to be updated or patched regularly. The weaknesses cybercriminals exploit are not broken windows or rusty door hinges. Rather, they are unintended flaws in software programs that allow cyber-criminals to manipulate your devices.

And don't forget, be mindful when online. Do not open suspicious emails requesting sensitive data, use secure internet connections, only visit trusted websites and keep your antivirus software up to date.

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