

Identity Theft Prevention Policies and Practices

To combat the growing problem of identity theft, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) issued new rules that now apply to all municipal utility operations. Oregon also has a new law - the Oregon Identity Theft Protection Act (OITPA). To comply with the new laws, the City of Independence adopted an Identity Theft Policy and has developed and implemented an Identity Theft Protection Program with policies and practices to protect and safeguard sensitive customer information.

The Policy is intended to identify red flags that will (1) protect sensitive information contained in existing accounts; and (2) develop measures to respond to fraudulent activity.

As an initial step, City staff is now required to verify the identity of all customers paying a utility bill with a credit card [if the name on the credit card is not the same as the customer name on the utility account]. Proper identification includes a Drivers License or Government issued photo ID card.

New utility customers will not be required to provide a Social Security Number on their application (optional) in order to open an account. All hardcopy applications are kept in a secured location until the legal retention period is met. At that time, the hardcopy applications are destroyed in accordance with the City's established records program.

The City believes the protection of customer records is of the utmost importance and keeping sensitive, personal information confidential and secure is an important part of our responsibility to our customers.

Web Links

[Federal Trade Commission Oregon Identity Theft Prevention Act](#)

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<http://www.ci.independence.or.us/publicworks/identity-theft-prevention-policies-and-practices>