Look around - everyone has some type of gadget in their hands. Whether a smartphone, tablet, laptop, or smart watch, everyone has technology in their possession at some point these days. But, where does all that information sent on these devices actually go? If I sign into Facebook, Twitter, or even my bank account, where is my password going? Who can see my password when I type it in? Every day citizens need to understand cyber safety and how to keep their passwords and other sensitive information private and secure.

What is no longer an option is putting off cyber security. This long overdue campaign will inform the public about cyber safety. We cannot continue to compromise safety for the sake of convenience. Even large companies like Target and Home Depot have had security breaches, but it is not only large companies who are victims of cyber crimes.

The public must be made aware of the importance of keeping their personal information private. The obvious elements include full names and social security numbers, but other important aspects such as addresses, phone numbers, usernames and passwords for various accounts can be used by criminals for nefarious purposes.

Although many believe the internet is the only source from which people can obtain personal information, there are numerous other ways. Not all information gathering is used for devious purposes. For instance, the healthcare industry must acquire your records to care for you and provide you with medical attention as needed. Other industries such as gaming sites and clothing stores gather your preferences to specify ads shown on your devices to sell you items. Also, your employer must have knowledge of your background in order to hire you. Sharing this information makes our lives easier, as long as it is done safely and with our knowledge and consent.

Another common misunderstanding is that information can only be stolen at a certain point in time. The feeding ground for hackers and other people is an ongoing cycle. Your information can be stolen at any time of day. You do not need to be on the internet or using a search engine such as Google for this to occur.

The most important knowledge a person can have when it comes to protecting themselves is to fully understand the importance of passwords. Using the same password for multiple accounts can make an easy target. The public must be taught to create and use secure passwords. For example, using various numbers in different sequences is a way to protect against a potential threat. However, common passphrases such as password, 12345678, or a name, are easy for people to decipher and use.

Our media campaign uses a public presentation that can be placed as a banner ad on popular websites, a spot on television, billboard signs, a TED talk style YouTube video, or even a live presentation in front of an audience!

