

## Travelers Study Reveals Offline Methods Are Top Causes for Identity Fraud Claims

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### 73% of identity fraud cases resulted from stolen personal items

Despite increased adoption of online shopping, mobile payment and banking apps, offline methods are the top known causes of identity fraud, according to a new study from Travelers (NYSE: [TRV](#)). The first insurance carrier to offer identity fraud insurance reports that even in the digital era, burglary, stolen wallets and pilfered identifications account for 73 percent of all cases, according to a comprehensive study of 2011 Travelers claim data.

Travelers Study Reveals Offline Methods Are Top Causes for Identity Fraud Claims - 73% of identity fraud cases resulted from stolen personal item (Graphic: Travelers)	Stolen or misplaced items, such as wallets and pocketbooks, accounted for the most common known causes for identity fraud. In the number two spot was a stolen or compromised license, Social Security card or other form of personal identification, according to the company's 2011 claim data. Burglaries rated third, followed by cyber breaches (including Internet scams) and old-fashioned forgeries.
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Since identity thieves acquire valuable personal information in less obvious ways—from sorting through trash for bank statements to stealing pre-approved credit card applications in the mail—only 10 percent of survey respondents could identify whom the perpetrator was who committed identity fraud against them.

“When everyday essentials, like wallets or drivers licenses, are stolen or go missing, identity fraud often follows,” said Joe Reynolds, Identity Fraud Product Manager at Travelers. “Credit cards, drivers licenses and other sources of personal information enable criminals to commit a fraud or crime, all in your name.”

Travelers found the following as the top known causes of identity fraud:

- 73 percent - burglary and theft of wallet/purse/personal identification/computer
- 15 percent - online or data breach
- 10 percent - forgery
- 2 percent - change of address/postal fraud

“People are not always aware that someone is illegally using their identity until suspicious activity appears on their monthly financial statement,” said Reynolds. “It is critical that consumers closely review these monthly documents, and remember to immediately call the bank if they suspect fraudulent activity.”

Consumers can take preventative measures to protect themselves from identity fraud. Travelers offers the following tips to avoid having identities stolen:

- **Carry only the essentials:** Leave the unnecessary credit cards and critical documents in a discrete, burglar-proof location in your home.
- **Beware of scams:** Do not fall for scams intended to pull at your heart strings. Do not disclose personal information, such as credit card and bank account details, if you receive an unsolicited request.
- **Do not throw away -- destroy:** Shred old bills and financial statements rather than placing them in the trash.
- **Make security a priority:** Make sure to store purses and wallets in a safe place, never print account information on envelopes of outgoing mail, and be careful about sharing personal information on social media.
- **Know your score:** Check your free credit report annually from the national credit reporting agencies by visiting [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com).

Travelers' Identity Fraud Expense Coverage is available as an endorsement on a homeowners policy for \$25 annually and offers protection up to \$25,000 per insured person with no deductible and includes comprehensive Identity Fraud Resolution Services. Travelers also offers Identity Fraud Expense Reimbursement Coverage to financial institutions and commercial entities as an employee, customer or membership benefit.

#### **About Travelers**

The Travelers Companies, Inc. (NYSE: [TRV](#)) is a leading provider of property casualty insurance for [auto](#), [home](#) and [business](#). The company's diverse business lines offer its global customers a wide range of coverage sold primarily through independent agents and brokers. A component of the Dow Jones Industrial Average, Travelers has more than 30,000 employees and operations in the United States and selected international markets. The company generated revenues of approximately \$25 billion in 2011. For more information, visit [www.travelers.com](http://www.travelers.com).

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Contact:

#### **The Travelers Companies, Inc.**

Gary Griffin, 860-954-1371

[ggriffin@travelers.com](mailto:ggriffin@travelers.com)

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