

Travelers Warns of 5 Types of Theft to Watch for this Holiday Season

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To help avoid some of the most common types of theft, Travelers (NYSE: [TRV](#)) recommends focusing on five areas in which theft spikes during the holiday season including identity fraud, burglaries from the home or car, customer data taken through cyber breaches, in-store theft and cargo-related robberies.

“There are so many distractions that come with the holidays that it may be easy to overlook steps that can help you protect your belongings and your business,” said Marty Henry, Senior Vice President, Risk Control at Travelers. “Since theft often becomes a larger issue around the holiday season, it is a good time to remind individuals and business owners to take extra precautions to help stay safe.”

Identity Theft

A recent study by Javelin Strategy shows more than 13 million identities were exposed in the U.S. last year. To help avoid becoming a victim of [identity theft](#), Travelers recommends reviewing your credit report now and after the New Year, closely reviewing your credit card statements, monitoring your mail, keeping a close eye on your wallet and purse while shopping, and carrying only those credit cards you will need.

Protecting Your Home and Car

Claim data from Travelers shows that belongings stolen from parked cars increases by about 20 percent on Black Friday, one of the busiest shopping days of the year. Travelers recommends keeping items, including purchased gifts, out of plain sight; parking in well-lit, safe areas; locking car doors and rolling up the windows. Your car, however, is not the only place thieves target during the holiday rush. Your porch and the packages waiting there are also on their list.

If you are having packages delivered to your home, have them dropped off in a safe location at a specific delivery time if possible, or opt to pick them up from the nearest facility.

Safeguard Your Business from Theft

Retail theft increases during the holidays, but business owners might be surprised to learn that while shoplifters account for 11 percent of store loss, employees account for 38 percent, according to a 2014 study by Retail Knowledge. The National Retail Federation expects businesses to hire between 725,000 and 800,000 temporary holiday workers this year. Retailers should be diligent in protecting their business from theft by evaluating daily transactions and reviewing security cameras each day, as well as conducting background checks on all prospective employees.

Stay Cyber-Safe

Online holiday sales in 2014 are estimated to rise between 8 and 11 percent, reaching as much as \$105 billion, according to the National Retail Federation. Because shoppers are expected to do much of their holiday shopping online, this emphasizes the importance of having strong cyber security controls in place to help protect your customers' information.

Businesses can help guard against cyberattacks by having a risk management plan in place that includes understanding the level of sensitivity of the data the company has stored; evaluating the company's systems and how to protect them; and by setting up an incident response team that can quickly respond to a data breach. It may also help to restrict access to only employees who need access and isolate your payment processing systems from other company network systems that may be less secure.

Keep Your Cargo Secure

All kinds of cargo theft –deceptive pickups, identity theft, misdirected loads, driver-involved theft and facility burglary – increase during the holiday season. According to FreightWatch, cargo thefts spike in September and October and stay above average right through the holidays.

Help to ensure shipments arrive at their intended destination by taking a few extra precautions, such as

checking documents and credentials for drivers picking up a shipment. Be leery of those who arrive early for a pickup, especially if it is toward the end of the week. Thieves often pose as drivers and arrive ahead of schedule for a pickup. Criminals often target days toward the end of the week as they hope the theft will not be discovered until the following Monday. Trucking companies should be aware of scenarios like this especially during the holiday season.

For more information on how to avoid various types of theft and staying safe this holiday season, visit www.travelers.com/prepare-prevent.

About Travelers

The Travelers Companies, Inc. (NYSE: [TRV](#)) is a leading provider of property casualty insurance for [auto](#), [home](#) and [business](#). A component of the Dow Jones Industrial Average, Travelers has approximately 30,000 employees and generated revenues of approximately \$26 billion in 2013. For more information, visit www.travelers.com.

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