



IDENTITY THEFT ASSISTANCE CENTER®

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For Immediate Release

NEW SURVEY IS EVIDENCE ECONOMIC DOWNTURN IS CONTRIBUTING TO RISE IN IDENTITY THEFT, SAYS ITAC

WASHINGTON, DC, February 10, 2009 – [ITAC](#), the Identity Theft Assistance Center, issued the following statement regarding the [2009 Identity Fraud Survey Report](#) released this week by [Javelin Strategy & Research](#):

In its Identity Theft Outlook for 2009, ITAC predicted the recession would put more pressure on consumers and create opportunity for identity criminals. Unfortunately, the Javelin survey – which shows identity theft has increased by 22 percent – is evidence this is indeed the case.

Identity theft is a crime of opportunity and the flagging economy has created ripe conditions for identity thieves. As we said at the outset of the recession, cuts in state and local budgets force law enforcement agencies to do more for less. We are also seeing schemes that exploit consumer anxiety over jobs and money, such as work-at-home and foreclosure fix-it scams.

The good news is the fraud prevention message appears to be sinking in. The cost of identity theft and the time it takes to resolve fraud has decreased – evidence consumers are spotting fraud and acting more quickly to contact their financial services company to minimize the damage to their accounts.

We encourage consumers to visit the ITAC website (www.identitytheftassistance.org) to learn how they can protect themselves.

About ITAC

ITAC, the Identity Theft Assistance Center (www.identitytheftassistance.org), is a nonprofit coalition of financial services companies united in our commitment to protect our customers from identity theft. ITAC's victim assistance service – which has helped more than 50,000 consumers recover from identity theft – is available at no cost to the millions of consumers who have an account at an ITAC member company. ITAC's identity protection service, ITAC Sentinel®, is available at www.itacsentinel.com),

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