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(Chadron)- Online Holiday Safety Tips From The Chadron PD

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(Chadron)-There are no lines when making purchases over the Internet, but this may increase your risk of identity theft. According to the Federal Trade Commission in 2011, a disproportionate number of scams, fraud, and identity theft-related incidents occur during the holiday season. As you shop for that special present for family and friends please make sure personal information remains just that – “personal” – by following these simple safety tips.

Online safety tips provided by the Chadron Police Department

- Use credit cards not debit cards when possible. Credit cards offer greater protection.
- Designate one credit card for online purchases, or use a pre-paid, single-use or virtual card.
- Don't reveal private financial data over shared wireless access points such as coffee shops.
- Never give credit card information over the phone unless you initiated the call or trust the company you are doing business with.
- Never link a bank account to an online pay service.
- Protect your computer with the latest browser, antivirus, anti-malware, and personal firewall protection and update regularly.
- Shop on secure sites that display "https" or a padlock in your browser address bar.
- Be aware of “phishing” e-mail scams that include website links advertising incredible deals.
- Leave suspicious websites immediately. Don't click on any buttons or download software.
- Take precautions by only using ATM machines found in or near a bank. These are less likely to be equipped with unscrupulous card readers, called “skimmers,” than an ATM located in a secluded area.
- Also, be careful about what you post on social media websites. Posting all-day shopping plans online informs Internet prowlers that you’re not at home and your house may be full of presents by nightfall.
- Remember to teach online safety tips to your kids, too.

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to call the police department for help at 308-423-1510. We would always be glad to help you with your questions rather than spend a large amount of time working an identify theft case after you clicked “enter”. Protect yourself and your family online and have a wonderful Holiday Season.