



ISAACS

Neighbourhood Watch Group

April
2009



AFP
AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

Sponsorship and distribution of this newsletter to residents in Chifley, Curtin, Farrer, Hughes, Isaacs, Lyons and Mawson/Swinger Hill is authorized by ACT NHW Inc. A modified version without monthly crime statistics is available at: <http://www.nhwact.com.au>

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Isaacs suburban snapshot – correction

Resident Alan Fitzgerald wrote to correct some of the information give in last month's "Suburban snapshot" sourced from the *Canberra Times*. Alan writes:

"While the suburb may have been named and gazetted in the Canberra Plan by the National Capital Development Commission (NCDC) in 1966, the suburb was certainly not 'established' in the sense of development and settlement.

"The present site of the suburb was a Pine Plantation until the 1980s.

"Development of roads and facilities and building of houses, followed by settlement, did not take place until about 1986 after the Pine Plantation was felled.

"There were various reasons - financial and political - for the delay in the development of Isaacs (and O'Malley), the two last suburbs in the Woden Valley to be developed by the NCDC before its abolition in 1989.

"The plan for Isaacs was changed several times - it was once meant to have far more government houses than it has, and even some of these were deleted at the last minute in favour of privately built town houses on small blocks."

Many thanks for your information, Alan.

Fireproofing your home

Here are some simple safety measures households can implement to reduce fire hazards:

- Keep portable heaters, toasters and stove tops clear of curtains, clothes, bedding and tablecloths;
- Install, and regularly check smoke alarms
- Folding and storing electric blankets can damage components, so lay it flat on the bed and turn it on for five minutes before covering it with bed linen;
- Have a known evacuation plan;
- Check appliance cords, and discard if frayed or damaged;
- Keep flues and chimneys clean and a fire screen around open fires (young children are attracted to flames);
- Regularly clean the lint from clothes dryers;
- Don't overload power points;
- Unplug electrical appliances when away from home;
- Store matches or lighters in a secure place not accessible to young children;
- When cooking, don't leave stove unattended;
- Use only authorised installers of fixed heating appliances;
- Oil, gas or wood heating units may require a yearly maintenance check;
- Only use fuses of recommended rating and install an electrical safety switch;
- Never leave burning candles or any open flame unattended;
- If possible, in the kitchen keep a fire extinguisher and fire blanket placed near the exit.

Source: www.realestate.com.au

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Crime Statistics: Crime statistics are deleted from the Website at the request of the AFP - they are available on hard copies distributed to all residents of the suburb.

Identity theft

What is identity theft?

Identity theft is a type of fraud which involves stealing money or gaining other benefits by pretending to be someone else. Having your identity stolen can be devastating- both financially and emotionally.

Identity theft can occur in many ways- from somebody using your credit card details illegally to make purchases to having your entire identity assumed by another person to open bank accounts, take out loans and conducting illegal business under your name.

How does identity theft work?

Identity theft works in a range of ways- from crude methods to well organised scams.

Many of us have a wealth of personal information readily available- cards in our wallet, mail, public records, information saved in our computers and information posted on social networking sites.

Identity theft can happen easily and quickly. By leaving your personal information readily available, scammers will have easy access to this information. For example, scammers will pay people to rummage through rubbish tips and steal letters (also referred to as 'dumpster diving') to collect personal information.

However, despite your best efforts, a determined scammer can also create elaborate and cunning plans to trick you into providing your personal details. For example:

- Phishing scams are all about tricking you into handing over your personal and banking details to scammers. Most work by setting up special links in the email to take you to a combination of genuine and spoofed websites.
- Phoney fraud alerts are similar to phishing scams where scammers trick you into handing over your personal details. A common fraud alert involves the scammer pretending to be from your bank informing you that your credit card or account has been cancelled because of suspicious criminal activity (various excuses are used). They will then trick you to provide account details to 'confirm' your identity.
- Bogus job opportunities are usually posted on job websites. The scammer may use or sell your personal information provided in the job application.

Warning signs

- You get an email or a phone call out of the blue asking you to 'validate' or 'confirm' banking details.
- You notice that amounts of money go missing from your bank account without any explanations.
- The caller pushes you to provide personal information and discourages you from checking if it's a genuine request.
- You are unable to obtain credit or a loan due to an unexplainable bad credit rating.

Protect yourself

- NEVER send money or give personal details to people you don't know and trust.
- If you receive a call from your bank or any other organisation, don't provide your personal details instead ask for their name and a contact number. Check with the organisation in question before calling back. Never rely on a number provided in an email or click on the provided link, instead find the contact number through an internet search or back of your ATM card.
- Regularly check your credit card and/or bank statements to ensure that suspicious transactions are detected.
- Shred all documents containing personal information, such as credit card applications, bank statements.
- Log directly on to a website that you are interested in rather than clicking on links provided in an email.
- Always get independent advice if you are unsure whether an offer/request is genuine.

Report them

If you think your identity has been misused, you should contact your bank or credit union to let them know. You can also report a scam to SCAMwatch. Tell your friends and family about the scam so they know what to be on the look out for if they are targeted.

Source and more information:

<http://www.scamwatch.gov.au/content/index.phtml/tag/identitytheft>

Please assist our police by reporting all suspicious activity to: CRIME STOPPERS use: 1800 333 000.

**For police attendance use: 131 444.
But, for all life-threatening emergencies use: "0 0 0"**