

YOU & the LAW



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Facial recognition: Who's watching you?

Facial recognition software is the technology that allows you to tag a friend on Facebook or use a digital photo album to identify people in your online pictures. That same software is also being used for security, law enforcement and retail marketing.

New technology can create a "faceprint" that allows you to be identified from a photograph or video recording. This technology is now sufficiently reliable to use for commercial purposes. Increased use of facial recognition software could affect your privacy in ways you least expect.

Most people who use a computer online know that their personal information can be vulnerable to hackers. Passwords and PINs (personal identification numbers) can help protect against theft of this information and provide some level of privacy.

If your online account is hacked, your password or PIN can be changed. But your face is a permanent, unchangeable part of your identity. When it is used to track your movements, your social interactions and your shopping habits, a large part of your privacy is lost. Privacy advocates worry that there is little or no regulation of how this technology can be used.



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Some stores scan a database of faceprints for known shoplifters, while others identify VIP customers and track their shopping preferences. You may feel like you are getting the royal treatment when a store clerk greets you by name, but there is a concern about how much of your privacy is being invaded without your permission.

So far, Illinois and Texas are the only states with laws regulating the use of biometric information such as facial recognition. In 2014, the U.S. Commerce Department's National Telecommunications and Information Administration set up meetings between companies and organizations that use the software and privacy advocates who want to see some regulation of this technology. The goal was to come up with voluntary

standards to regulate facial recognition technology and protect consumer privacy. To date, these groups have not been able to agree on any standards.

Privacy advocates suggest that in some instances a person's permission should be required before recording his or her presence and movement in a public place. Other suggestions for privacy protection include requiring encryption of faceprints, giving consumers the right to know who has a copy of their faceprint and how it is being used, and adopting special protections for children from being targeted by facial recognition systems.

You can stay informed on changes in technology and how they can affect your privacy by visiting these websites:

- National Telecommunications and Information Administration, www.ntia.doc.gov
- Center on Privacy & Technology at Georgetown Law, www.law.georgetown.edu/academics/centers-institutes/privacy-technology/
- Center for Democracy & Technology, cdt.org
- Center for Digital Democracy, www.democraticmedia.org



Heat-related health issues can be a serious summer concern

Heat-related illness can sneak up on you before you are aware it is a problem. Prevent overheating with the following practices:

- › Drink more fluids in hot weather; don't wait until you feel thirsty. But avoid alcohol and sugary drinks. They can cause you to lose more body fluid.
- › Limit exercise and outdoor activity to cooler morning and evening hours. Stay indoors during the hottest part of the day, preferably in an air-conditioned place.
- › Take a cool shower or bath.
- › When outdoors, wear light-weight, light-colored, loose clothing and a wide-brimmed hat. Stay in the shade.
- › Never leave anyone in a closed, parked vehicle, even briefly. Temperatures inside a closed vehicle can rise to dangerous levels very quickly.
- › Watch infants and young children for signs of heat exhaustion. Check on older adults and anyone with mental illness or health problems.



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Safety precautions help protect children in or near the water

Being in or near the water offers a great way to cool off on a hot day and encourages healthy outdoor activity. But this summer activity comes with a caution. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, three children die every day as a result of drowning. A few sensible precautions can prevent a fun summer activity from turning into a tragedy.

Always have a responsible adult assigned to watch young children around water. Even children who know how to swim need close supervision.

Avoid distracting activities while supervising children around water. A few minutes of inattention can result in tragedy.

If several adults are watching a group of children, take turns stepping away from the group in 15-minute segments to give your undivided attention to those in or around the water.

Teach your children to swim. Lessons from a trained instructor are an important part of safety protection

for children. Even very young children can learn to float on their back.

Be sure you know how to swim, float and move through the water without panic.

Adults and older teens should learn cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). This skill could save a life.

All home pools should be completely enclosed with isolation fencing and self-locking gates to keep young children out of the pool area. Lock and alarm doors and windows that open to the pool area.

Life jackets should be mandatory for all children around lakes, ponds and other natural bodies of water.



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America elects a new president this fall



U.S. presidential elections happen every four years, and this year's presidential election will be held November 8, 2016. A candidate for president must be at least 35 years of age, a natural born citizen, and a resident of the United States for at least 14 years.

The president elected this fall will take office on Inauguration Day, January 20, 2017. President Obama, first elected in 2008 and elected to a second term in 2012, cannot run for a third term. The 22nd Amendment to the U.S. Constitution limits presidents to two terms in office.

Electoral College versus popular vote

The president is elected by an indirect vote, which means that when you cast your ballot on Election Day, you are selecting members of the U.S. Electoral College committed to your

candidate. Those electors will then gather in their state and cast their direct vote for president.

The candidate receiving a majority of the electoral votes, 270 out of a total of 538, becomes the president of the United States. If no candidate receives a majority, the House of Representatives selects the president.

It is possible for a candidate to be elected president without receiving a majority of the popular vote, since it is the electoral votes that count. The last time this occurred was in 2000.

Voting is the cornerstone of democracy.

The U.S. Constitution guarantees the right to vote to all men and women who are United States citizens aged 18 or older, regardless of race, color or previous condition of servitude.

But this was not always the case.

In this country's early history, most states allowed only white, free, male property owners to vote. Literacy tests, poll taxes and religious tests were used to deny women, freed slaves and religious and ethnic minorities the right to vote. Over the years, many people worked hard to ensure that every citizen had the right to vote.

Casting a vote is your opportunity to have a voice in how your country is governed — even if your vote is only one among millions cast and even if your candidate loses.

Find out more about voting rights and voter registration at the website for the United States Election Assistance Commission: www.eac.gov/default.aspx.



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



New identity theft protection and recovery program

Have you received notice that your personal information was exposed in a data breach? Did you lose your wallet or learn that an online account of yours was hacked? You may be the victim of identity theft.

According to a 2015 report from the Bureau of Justice Statistics, an estimated 17.6 million Americans, roughly 7 percent of those aged 16 or older, were victims of identity theft. The majority of victims (86 percent) experienced fraudulent use of information for credit cards or bank accounts. About 14 percent experienced some out-of-pocket losses.

Identity theft includes unauthorized use or attempted use of your bank or credit card account and the use or attempted use of your information to open a new account.

The Federal Trade Commission recently launched a website to help victims of identity theft implement a plan of recovery, *identitytheft.gov*. The site has checklists and sample letters to guide you in repairing damage from identity theft and recovering the security of your accounts.

It also lists steps to take if you have lost your Social Security number, online password, debit or credit card number, bank account number, driver's license information, or your child's personal information.

If someone steals your identity, you have the right to:

- ♦ create an identity theft report,
- ♦ free copies of your credit report,

- ♦ place a 90-day initial fraud alert on your credit report,
- ♦ place a seven-year extended fraud alert on your credit report,
- ♦ get fraudulent information removed (or "blocked") from your credit report,
- ♦ dispute fraudulent or inaccurate information on your credit report,
- ♦ stop creditors and debt collectors from reporting fraudulent accounts,
- ♦ get copies of documents related to the identity theft, and
- ♦ stop a debt collector from contacting you.