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For Immediate Release

Illinois credit unions offer second opportunity for free document shredding

Naperville, IL., July 24, 2008 -- Credit unions across Illinois are banding together for a second time to shred documents for free in an effort to help protect consumers from identity theft. Illinois credit unions previously declared June 2008 as "Shred Month".

Identity theft continues to rise as thieves grow more inventive with new scams created every day. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) estimates that 9 million Americans are victims of identity theft each year. It has also reported that identity theft fraud accounted for more than 33 percent of all complaints reported last year, and ID theft is a major concern among consumers.

The use of "phishing", where identity thieves pretend to be a legitimate financial institution to get consumers to reveal their personal information via spam e-mails or pop-up messages, has exploded. Dumpster diving, the act of stealing a victim's trash in search of documents containing personal information, is also common.

On Shred Day, the community is invited to bring their unwanted personal documents, such as tax paperwork, old account statements, cancelled checks, credit card and ATM receipts, unwanted credit card offers to be shredded on the spot by the shredding truck in the participating credit union's parking lot.

"Every three seconds, someone becomes a victim of identity theft. Education and properly disposing of personal documents are among the best ways to deter thieves," said Dan Plauda, president/chief executive officer of the Illinois Credit Union League, the primary trade association for credit unions in Illinois. "We invite the community to visit their local credit union participating in Shred Days and bring their documents to protect themselves from identity theft."

Credit unions of Illinois offer the following guidelines about what documents to keep and for how long:

- **Credit card receipts and statements:** Keep receipts until your monthly statement arrives; if that's correct, shred the receipts. Exceptions: Keep a receipt if you're disputing a bill or to cover a warranty or return period. Keep the statements for seven years if they contain tax-related expenses.
- **Pay stubs:** Make sure the information on your paycheck stubs matches your annual W-2 when you receive it, then shred the stubs. If your employer lists sick/ leave/vacation carryover on your paycheck stub, keep the last one of the year.

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Notify your employer if the information doesn't match.

- **Credit union records:** At the end of each year, go through your share draft carbons or statements and only keep those related to taxes, business expenses, and housing or mortgage payments.
- **Tax records:** The IRS has three years to audit your return, and you have three years to file an amended return to claim a refund if you made a mistake. If you made a mistake of underreporting your gross income by 25% or more on a return, the IRS has six years to challenge it. If you filed a fraudulent return or didn't file one at all, the IRS can catch you on it at any time. Keep a copy of all 1040 tax forms permanently.
- **Miscellaneous:** Keep these permanently: Updated household inventory, birth and death certificates, marriage license, divorce papers, military records, insurance claims, accident reports and claims, proof of ownership and major debt repayment, IRA contribution records, and legal correspondence.

Credit unions of Illinois are holding Shred Days as part of a new statewide consumer awareness campaign called "iBelong", which ICUL entered into an agreement with the Pennsylvania Credit Union Association (PCUA) to utilize for two years. PCUA developed the campaign as part of its advocacy efforts.

More than 2,200 newspaper ads in 270 papers, 4,400 radio ads on 90 stations, 103 billboards in 19 counties, and 5,500 cable TV spots on several popular networks began running in May. All of these commercials will be split between the four-week flight that already occurred in May and the second, four-week flight in August. The campaign touts lower fees, personal service, better rates and caring staff and are the result of a cooperative effort by many of the state's more than 430 credit unions that pooled their marketing dollars to spread the word to consumers that they have choices in banking.

Information regarding the cities and credit union locations of where the Shred Days are taking place is available [via the iBelong Web site](#) and are listed below. Also included are activities being held in conjunction with the events and other details.

- **Alton**, August 16, 9:00 a.m. – noon, Olin Community CU, 3353 College Ave. Donuts and coffee will be served in the branch. For more information, contact: (618) 258-3168.
- **Bethalto**, August 16, 9:00 a.m. – noon, Olin Community CU, 731 E. Bethalto Dr. Donuts and coffee will be served in the branch. For more information, contact: (618) 258-3168.
- **East Alton**, August 2, 9:00 a.m. – noon, Olin Community CU, 419 N. Shamrock. Donuts and coffee will be served in the branch. For more information, contact: (618) 258-3168.
- **Godfrey**, August 2, 9:00 a.m. – noon, Olin Community CU, 5301 Godfrey Rd. Donuts and coffee will be served in the branch. For more information, contact: (618) 258-3168.

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- **Harvey**, September 29, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Sherwin Williams CU, 14700 Myrtle Ave.; individuals may bring up to two shoe boxes of personal documents. For more information, contact: (708) 333-0900.
- **Jerseyville**, July 26, 9:00 a.m. – noon, Olin Community CU, 300 W. County Rd. Donuts and coffee will be served in the branch. For more information, contact: (618) 258-3168.
- **Joliet**, July 26, 10:00 a.m. – noon, New Century FCU, 291 Springfield Ave. For more information, contact: (815) 727-3691.
- **Naperville**, August 2, 10:00 a.m. – noon, Hawthorne CU, 1519 N. Naper Blvd. There will also be a drawing for a fire-proof home safe. For more information, contact: (630) 369-4070.
- **Oak Lawn**, August 9, 9:00 a.m. – noon, Bell West Community CU and the Joseph S. DeRamus Chapter of Credit Unions, 9930 Southwest Hwy. This event is in conjunction with many other area credit unions, including: Access CU, Alliance Financial CU, Bell West Community CU, Chicago Avenue Garage FCU, and Sweetheart Cup FCU. For more information, contact: (708) 449-4800.
- **Peoria**, August 16, 2:00 – 5:00 p.m., CEFCU Summershade Member Center, 5211 W. Landens Way. This event is in conjunction with 10 other area credit unions, including: CEFCU, Haulpak FCU, Members Choice CU, Parish Members CU, Peoria Bell CU, Peoria City ECU, Peoria Fire Fighters CU, Peoria Hiway CU, Peoria Journal Star CU, Peoria Postal ECU, Peoria U.S. EFCU, Redbrand CU, and Tazewell County Government ECU. Free popcorn and bottled water will be handed out to all attendees, and there will be several drawings for home shredders. For more information, contact: (309) 633-7072.
- **South Holland**, September 29, 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Sherwin Williams CU, 16230 Prince Dr.; individuals may bring up to two shoe boxes of personal documents. For more information, contact: (708) 333-0900.

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Note: The Illinois Credit Union League is the primary trade association for credit unions in Illinois, which provides members with information, legislation and education. Membership is open to any credit union operating in accordance with the Illinois Credit Union Act or the Federal Credit Union Act. There are 434 credit unions in Illinois with more than 2.7 million members.