McDERMOTTâ€™S SUSSMAN SAYS BREACHES RISING FOR STATE GOVERNMENTS

from The Privacy Times

The frequency of breaches at State and local government agencies continues to increase at an alarming rate, averaging somewhere between five and ten a month over the past year, according to Heather Egan Sussman, a partner in the law firm of McDermott Will & Emery LLP.

â€œWe are now seeing organized hacking groups target government institutions entrusted with the privacy and security of highly sensitive information. As the level of sophistication of these attacks becomes more intense, and while more and more insiders have access to sensitive data and databases, more needs to be done at the State and local level to ensure that data is being protected. Otherwise, we could start to see a backlash against constituents communicating online, and doing business, with their State and local governments and agencies,â€• said Sussman, who is co-chair of the firmâ€™s Global Privacy and Data Protection Affinity Group.

Some of the 2011 breaches, include:

- Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development â€“ 210,000 records exposed.

- Alaska Department of Education and Early Development â€“ 89,519 records exposed.

- Oklahoma State Department of Health â€“ 133,000 records exposed.

- Texas Comptrollerâ€™s Office â€“ 3.5 million records exposed.

- South Carolina State Budget and Control Board Employee Insurance Program â€“ 5,600 records exposed.

Sussman said County Sheriffâ€™s Departmentâ€™s Web sites in the south were the latest public agency to fall victim to serial hacker group â€œAnonymous,â€• which reportedly stole emails, credit card numbers, and other information.

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