

Equifax Data Breach Worse Than First Reported

March 2, 2018 - When Equifax first reported a massive data breach last year, the company first announced that more than 143 million Americans had their personally identifiable information stolen by hackers from the company's database. Then in October, the company revised that number upward by more than 2 million people. Now comes word that another 2.4 million people need to be added to the list. This means that more than 147 million people have been impacted in this single data breach.

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Based on the information released by Equifax, the new batch of victims may be better protected from identity theft than many of people included in prior announcements. That's because the information released in this group included names and partial driver's license numbers but no social security numbers. That's probably not enough information to easily commit identity theft. But a determined cybercriminal may be able to use this information to gain access to other data on victims, which could eventually lead to ID theft.

According to Equifax, the company is continuing to scour its database to determine the extent of the data breach. This means that more announcements like this could be coming.

Equifax is offering a year of free credit monitoring to the newly announced victims; a service which have repeatedly said is worthless because credit monitoring will only notify you of a problem after it occurs. It does nothing to prevent ID theft. For the best protection, victims should seriously consider freezing their credit file.

Equifax is currently under investigation by Congress over the data breach. According to Rep. Greg Walden (R-OR), Chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee which is overseen the probe, the company has only provided partial responses to question despite "repeated" requests for information.

byJim Malmberg

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