

Top 10 Ways Your Privacy is Threatened

[Compliments of the Federal Privacy Office]

10.	Surveillance cameras, swipe cards, internet searches: as you go about your daily routine, you actually leave a trail of data behind you for others to collect, merge, analyze and even sell, often without your knowledge or consent.
9.	New and exciting technologies are emerging daily, but often your personal information is the cost of admission. Think about the information you have surrendered just to play online games, join virtual worlds, or even shop online.
8.	Millions of people post all sorts of personal information about themselves, their family and their friends on social networking sites without reviewing the privacy policies, modifying the privacy settings, or considering how this information can be used or misused by others.
7.	Governments are indiscriminately collecting mountains of personal data in the name of national security and public safety.
6.	Businesses are collecting more and more information about an ever-greater number of people, often without having appropriate means to protect the information or dispose of it.
5.	Data breaches happen every day in both the public and private sectors. Recent incidents have exposed the personal information of millions of people. In fact, you could already have been one of those people, but due to the lack of mandatory breach reporting laws in Canada, you may never even be informed.
4.	Fraudsters have become extremely devious and technologically savvy. From the other side of the planet, they can steal your personal information. These days, you need to shred documents, protect your computer, watch out for fraudulent e-mails, be on guard against pretexting and much more.
3.	Identity theft, which is fuelled by excessive personal information collection and failure to protect it, is rampant and it is becoming a very lucrative business for criminals.
2.	We live in a global society where information flows freely around the world, from person to person, jurisdiction to jurisdiction, public sector to private sector and all privacy protection laws are not created equal.
1.	The notion that "if you have nothing to hide, you have nothing to fear". Privacy is an essential freedom that shapes our society, an internationally recognized human right and the foundation of modern democracy but, if we don't value our privacy, or stand up for it as our right, it will be eroded over time.