



# TOWN OF ESSEX VERMONT

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<<Recipient Name>>  
<<Street Address>>  
<<City>><<State>><<Zip>>

Date: April 13, 2016

RE: Notice of Data Security Incident

Dear <<Recipient Name>>

The Town of Essex is writing to inform you of a recent event that may affect the security of your personal information. We are providing this notice to provide you with information about the incident, steps we are taking in response, and steps you can take to protect against identity theft and fraud should you feel it is appropriate to do so.

**What Happened?** On April 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016 an unknown person sent fraudulent emails to the Town of Essex staff, pretending to be a Town Official. This email requested payroll records for all Town personnel. Mistakenly, town staff did not confirm the identity of the sender and sent the requested payroll records in response to the fraudulent emails. On April 12, 2016 we discovered this fraud when several Town employees tried to file their tax returns and found their accounts had been compromised. On April 12, 2016 we were able to confirm that the suspect emails were indeed fraudulent and that the records that were provided contained Personally Identifying Information (PII) listed below.

**What Information Was Involved?** Information released were copies of Essex Town personnel 2015 W2's, phone, date of hire, date of birth and rate of pay information.

**What We Are Doing.** We take the security of your personal information very seriously. Upon learning of this incident we immediately notified the Essex Police Department and the case number assigned to this incident is 16ES01880. We continue to investigate this incident to ensure the security of your information. In an abundance of caution, we are providing notice of this incident to all individuals whose information may be at risk as a result of this incident. We will be working on new policies, procedures and training to better protect our storage and use of PII.

**We Have Notified.** We have notified the Essex Police and are working on notifying the Vermont Attorney General's Office, VT Tax Department and IRS. Additionally, the Town will be offering all potentially affected individuals access to some form of credit monitoring and identity theft protection services. The attached/enclosed Privacy Safeguards Information contains instruction on how to check your credit, notify and activate credit alerts with the three major credit reporting agencies as well as more information on how to better protect against identity theft and fraud. To the extent you have not done so already, we encourage you to file your 2015 state and federal tax returns as soon as possible. More details about credit monitoring services will be forwarded shortly.

**What Can You Do?** **1.** If you have not filed your 2015 taxes please do so as soon as possible. **2.** Please set up your [on-line Social Security account](#) if you have not done so already. If you determine that your Social Security account has been compromised contact the IRS and file an IRS Identity Theft Affidavit (IRS Form 14039). The IRS can be contacted at 1-800-908-4490, and IRS Form 14039 can be downloaded at [www.irs.gov/uac/taxpayer-Guide-to-Identity-theft](http://www.irs.gov/uac/taxpayer-Guide-to-Identity-theft). **3.** We also recommend you seriously consider contacting one of the supplied credit agencies to request a credit freeze on your credit account due to potential identity theft. Credit freezes can be added/removed at any time and should not cost you any money. **4.** We will be posting all needed information and resources on our town website at this location [www.essex.org/idtheftinformation](http://www.essex.org/idtheftinformation). Updates about this incident, helpful links and details about credit monitoring services will be posted there soon

We are very sorry for any inconvenience or concern this incident causes you. The security of your information is a priority to us, and we are taking steps to prevent an incident like this from happening again. If you have further questions or concerns, you may contact Doug Fisher or Rick Garey at the Essex Town Offices.

Sincerely,

Douglas Fisher  
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Rick Garey  
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Captain/Essex Police Department  
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