UC SANTA BARBARA

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Make Yourself Cyber Secure

You've seen the headlines: Organizations large and small falling victim to data breaches and hackers' increasingly sophisticated schemes. No one is immune to their efforts, but you can protect yourself — and the university — by maintaining cyber security vigilance.

October is National Cyber Security Awareness Month and a good opportunity to remind ourselves that information and systems we use to carry out the university's mission of teaching, research and public service must be safeguarded.

To keep your information — and that of the university — safe, it is important to incorporate good cyber security habits into your daily routine.

Sometimes, however, though you do everything right, you can still find that you've become a victim. For example, numerous data breaches at well-known companies have affected millions due to no fault of the people impacted. In addition, natural disasters are often followed by a wave of scams, such as phony donation websites.

Here are three tips to help you protect yourself from the unexpected:

1. Review your bank and credit card statements monthly. This is often the first place you will see signs of identity theft. If you think you may be a victim of identity theft, see the identity theft resources here for help.
2. Back up your critical files — at home and at work. Store backups in a physically separate location from the originals, and test them periodically.

3. Always think twice before clicking on links or opening attachments. This is the best way to protect yourself from scammers. Whenever possible, go to web pages by a path you know is legitimate instead of clicking on a link in a message. And if an attachment is unexpected, contact the sender by a method you know is legitimate to confirm he or she sent it.

For more information on cybersecurity at UCSB, visit https://security.ucsb.edu. Additional cyber security awareness information and resources are available on UC's Information Security Awareness website at https://security.ucop.edu/resources/security-awareness/index.html.

Information about the National Cyber Security Awareness Month campaign can be found at https://staysafeonline.org/ncsam/about/.

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.