

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF TECHNOLOGY & INFORMATION



DTI eSecurity News — Why Care About Wi-Fi ?

Is Free Wi-Fi Really Free?



Tempted to connect to that "Free Wi-Fi" hotspot? It's worth doing your homework before selecting any network that's open or not familiar to you. For example, if you're in a coffee shop or public library, make sure to verify the name of the network with staff.

It's pretty easy for someone who wants to intercept your data in a **man-in-the-middle attack** to set up a network called "Free Wi-Fi" or any other variation that includes a nearby venue name, to make you think it's a legitimate source.

Tips for Safer Wi-Fi

There is no way to guarantee absolute security while using public free Wi-Fi. There are some steps you can take to lessen exposure of your personal information while on a public network.

- ◆ Never conduct banking, bill payment or direct online shopping on a free Wi-Fi network
- ◆ If you are connecting via Windows, make sure to turn off file sharing and mark the Wi-Fi connection as a public network. You can find this option in the **Control Panel > Network and Sharing Center > Change Advanced Sharing Settings**. Under the Public heading, turn off file sharing. You may also want to turn on the Windows Firewall when connecting to a public network if it's not already activated. These settings are also found in **Control Panel > Windows Firewall**.
- ◆ On Mac, open up System Preferences and navigate to the Sharing icon. Then, uncheck the box next to File Sharing.. You can also turn on the firewall within OS X by heading to System Preferences, **Security & Privacy** and click the Firewall tab.

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Taking Public Wi-Fi Private

Are you familiar with the term virtual private network (VPN)? It is one of the most secure ways of browsing the Internet when accessing a network through public Wi-Fi hotspots.

Why should you use VPN while connecting to the Internet through public Wi-Fi? Because VPN channels your connection through a series of security options. This ensures that the hackers are not able to access your network with ease.



If you are accessing a number of unknown websites on a regular basis, getting a VPN can be a good idea. Most Internet Service Providers (ISP) offer VPN options, check with your provider to see what's available.

For state government and school districts, DTI provides VPN access. Check with your organizations' Information Security Officer (ISO) to learn about the options available to you.

Finally, take the time to learn about the security settings for your mobile devices. Use these settings to prevent your phone or tablet from automatically connecting to any Wi-Fi within range. Opt instead to manually connect only after viewing Wi-Fi options and approving.

SEPTEMBER IS AMERICA'S PREPARE-ATHON

The goal is to increase the number of individuals who:

- Understand which disasters could happen in their community
- Know what to do to be safe, mitigate damage, and take action to increase their preparedness
- For more information: <http://www.ready.gov/ready2015>

Questions or comments?

Email us at [eSecurity@state.de.us](mailto:eSecurity@state.de.us)

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