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Identity theft and mailboxes



The surge in credit card fraud, identity fraud and scams is commonly achieved through mailbox theft. Identity crime costs Australia upwards of \$1.6 billion each year, with the majority (around \$900m) lost by individuals through credit card fraud, identity theft and scams.

Mailboxes have become an easy target for thieves who find breaking into them relatively simple. Some thieves even use master keys to access the mail of every residence in an apartment block.

Consumers' Federation of Australia has a representative on a [Standards Australia](https://www.standards.org.au/) (https://www.standards.org.au/) Technical Committee which recently published **AS 4253:2019 Mailboxes**. The standard specifies requirements for the design, construction and performance of mailboxes in both commercial and residential applications. It is intended for use by regulatory authorities and all persons concerned with the manufacture, installation, and general requirements of mailboxes. Read more [here](https://www.standards.org.au/news/mailbox-standard-signed,-sealed-and-delivered) (https://www.standards.org.au/news/mailbox-standard-signed,-sealed-and-delivered).

Locking your mailbox is one of the most effective ways of preventing identity theft. More information about protecting yourself from becoming a victim of identity theft and related information at [Australian Federal Police Identity Crime \(https://www.afp.gov.au/what-we-do/crime-types/fraud/identity-crime\)](https://www.afp.gov.au/what-we-do/crime-types/fraud/identity-crime).

Useful links:

- Report a scam to [ACCC \(https://www.scamwatch.gov.au/report-a-scam\)](https://www.scamwatch.gov.au/report-a-scam) or the [Australian Cybercrime Online Reporting Network \(ACORN\) \(http://www.acorn.gov.au/\)](http://www.acorn.gov.au/).
- If you have been the victim of identity theft, contact [IDCARE \(https://www.idcare.org/\)](https://www.idcare.org/) on 1300 432 273. IDCARE can guide you through the steps to reclaim your identity.
- Find out more about fraud prevention [here \(https://www.accc.gov.au/about-us/australian-competition-consumer-commission/accountability/fraud-prevention\)](https://www.accc.gov.au/about-us/australian-competition-consumer-commission/accountability/fraud-prevention) and identity theft [here \(https://www.scamwatch.gov.au/types-of-scams/attempts-to-gain-your-personal-information/identity-theft\)](https://www.scamwatch.gov.au/types-of-scams/attempts-to-gain-your-personal-information/identity-theft).

Consumers' Federation of Australia needs volunteers to represent consumers on [Standards Australia \(https://www.standards.org.au/\)](https://www.standards.org.au/) Technical Committees to ensure the standards address the concerns of everyday Australians – for more information see [CFA Standards Project \(http://consumersfederation.org.au/standards-2/\)](http://consumersfederation.org.au/standards-2/) or **contact** standards@consumeraction.org.au (<mailto:standards@consumeraction.org.au>).

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