

## Security Tips for April

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Are the headlines, describing one security breach upon another, causing you to pay attention? As a result, this column has been added to the newsletter.

Those little packets marked “do not eat” or the capsules protecting medicine have an important use if you act now. Did you ever accidentally wet the remote control for your car or TV? Ever wet your phone? NOW is the time (before the damp spring) to make sure to dry and keep the packets safe and dry in freezer quality plastic bags. You can dry used packets in a 180-degree oven. When a wet accident occurs, wipe the electronics dry, open a new bag that fits, place those packets and the device inside, and seal. The next day you will hopefully have a working item.

Facebook scam! (not just Facebook). Do you get messages URGING immediate action? A message circulating REQUIRES immediate action to protect the number of “friends” you can have. It urges that you take some action NOW (like endorsing the message or posting it on your wall). SCAM! Sometimes the message asks for access to your address book or to forward it along or to respond. Unless you are sure of the truth TAKE NO ACTION! Do NOT divulge personal information!

Network hijacking is rampant. PLEASE use a long, complicated password (everywhere). On your network, the least you can do is to place a label under your router with the password in case you need it in the future. Change default passwords.

Advice from the WPCUG president: Pierre has a strategy for securing his portable devices. If a major software release is announced, wait 72 hours before installing it. If there is an issue, other people will find it, NOT YOU. Minor upgrades are another story. Install them IMMEDIATELY. There are serious hardware and software issues currently being addressed by manufacturers. Stay alert!

Facial recognition is being used by police in China. So—you have no plans to go there and don’t care? BULLETIN—The facial characteristics that identify you as unique can be recorded and retained. This technology is going to have tremendous impact going forward and not just in China. In the U.S., scanners mounted on cars or in the street can read thousands of license plates per hour. Drive around a city block in Manhattan more than a certain number of times and your car will be flagged by a computer. Stay tuned. The automatic toll readers have created havoc.

Your author recently was charged for a trip from Albany to New York City on the NY State Thruway in error! Actually, it was a trip from exit 16 to Westchester. It took two

months to correct! I would not have looked at the bill but had to change my credit card.  
**CHECK ALL YOUR BILLS!**