

June 2007

THE CREDITOR

MEMPHIS MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES FEDERAL CREDIT UNION



Tips To Help Make Your Vacation Go Smoother

Vacations offer a rare time to be together and create memories that will last a long time. Your credit union wants you to make the most of your vacation and spend the most time you can enjoying the benefits of your destination rather than straightening out potential problems. We offer the following tips:

1. Have a plan. Have a general sense of what you and your family want to do and when you want to do it. Popular hotels, restaurants, and attractions tend to fill up with reservations and often those who just "show up" are turned away. Call ahead and make reservations.
2. If traveling by air, allow plenty of time to check in at the airport. Allow plenty of time to get through security and to your gate. Be sure to pack magazines and books for the inevitable wait in the airline terminal or on the plane itself. Also, visit <http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/> to find out what items are permitted and prohibited through security checkpoints.
3. If traveling by auto, first make sure your vehicle is road-ready. Change the oil, check your tires (the spare, too), and top off all fluid levels. Be sure to pack an emergency kit that includes a first aid kit, blanket, flares, map or atlas, some nonperishable food (energy bars, for example), and some drinking water. A cell phone and charger is always a good idea. And if you are not already a member of an auto club, consider joining one before you go, especially if it is a major trip.
4. Leave an itinerary with friends or family members along with addresses and phone numbers where you can be reached in case of emergency. This is especially important if you have someone caring for your pet or if you have sick or elderly relatives.
5. If you wear eyeglasses, pack an extra pair if you have them. Or at least, pack your old set of eyeglasses for emergency. Also, if you have any allergies or chronic health conditions, be sure to pack critical medications. Keep those medications with you, and not packed away in luggage. If you don't already carry a list of medications and allergies in your wallet or purse, make a list and carry it.

Overloaded Bills

Wzell Garner Speaks...

... Weighing You Down?

If you have one or more credit cards that are near or at the maximum limit and making the minimum monthly payment, you are in what is known as the "credit card trap." Despite their talk of wise use of credit, this is the position creditors love you to be in. Your monthly payment goes almost all toward the interest, with a miniscule amount going toward the principle. The result—you never pay off the credit card or even come close, especially if you keep piling on additional debt with new purchases. At MMEFCU, we are here to help you get out of the credit card trap. Ask us about a loan to consolidate your bills and improve your financial posture. Log on to www.mmefcu.org, call us, or stop by!



NEED TRAVELERS CHECKS?

Traveling this summer? Before you go, purchase low-cost travelers checks at your credit union. They are as good as cash at most hotels, restaurants, gift shops, theme parks, etc., - anywhere you would otherwise pay with cash. If they are lost or stolen, you can get them replaced quickly - usually within 24 hours or even less. This can prevent your vacation from turning into a disaster.

By all means, carry some cash and use it to pay for incidental expenditures. But for larger purchases (\$50 and up), travelers checks are the way to go. They are available in varying denominations, and the peace of mind of having them is more than worth the low cost. Before you leave on your next trip, stop by your credit union and ask about purchasing travelers checks!

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Your Savings
At The Credit Union
Are Insured To
\$100,000

COMPLIANCE NOTICE !!!

The credit union may report information about your accounts to credit bureaus. Late payments, missed payments or other defaults on your account may be reflected in your credit report.

Don't Become A Victim Of Home Equity Loan Fraud

Consumers Union (publishers of the magazine "Consumer Reports") estimates more than 100,000 Americans annually are victims of home equity loan fraud - either losing their homes entirely or losing a good chunk of their home's value. Shady lenders usually contact you by phone, over the Internet, or at your doorstep and then trick you into taking out a loan against your home that you cannot afford to repay. These loans typically have very high interest rates and steep fees. When you fall behind on your payments, the lender takes your home and all your equity through a legal process called foreclosure. The best rule of thumb is don't sign for a home equity loan from anyone who comes to you.

Your credit union wants to protect your home and your equity in it. When the time is right to borrow against the value in your home to remodel, make needed repairs, to consolidate debt, or whatever purpose you see fit, talk to your credit union first. We can offer you a home equity loan that is tailored to your needs and one that you can afford to repay. At the very least, we can help you determine if the other offer is a good one.



Trying To Rebuild Or Start Your Credit?

People who are just starting out to establish their credit, or those trying to rebuild their credit history after a financial crisis, need special help when they need to borrow money. Your credit union is here to help, with a secured loan. Paying your loan back in full and on time establishes a credit history, so that in the future you can be considered for an unsecured loan, such as a signature loan or credit card.

Rebuilding or starting a credit history takes a little time, so you need to be patient. If you need credit and have no history or are challenged by recent financial troubles, see your credit union first. We may be able to help you with a loan tailored for you.

Cyberspace - Keeping Your Kids Safe

According to a study done by the University of New Hampshire's Crimes Against Children Research Center, one out of every five children who used the Internet received an online sexual approach or solicitation during a one-year period. In 15 percent of these cases, the solicitor attempted to meet the child in person. And if asked, more than 29 percent of children using the Internet will freely give out personal information online.

Listed below are safety guidelines for parents to help keep their kids safe online:



* Place the computer in a common room in your home so everyone can see it.

* Establish rules for using the Internet.

* Talk with your children about potential online dangers and teach them important safety guidelines for using the Internet.

* Spend time online with your children and visit their favorite sites.

* Use blocking software or filtering programs. Don't depend on these programs as your only defense.

* Check the computer's Internet history to see what sites they are visiting.

* It is a known fact that predators often use chat rooms to contact children. Teach your children that people online often are not who they say they are.

* Monitor your children's e-mail accounts. Let them know you're checking their account and why.

* If you think your child may be a victim of Internet exploitation, contact the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children at 1-800-THE-LOST.

Bills To Pay? Click And It's Done!

Hate paying bills? Who doesn't? So make quick work of it when you use online bill pay. With online bill pay, there's no hunting down envelopes or stamps. No extra trips to the post office either. It's the no-hassle way to take care of your obligations; for example, your regularly recurring items such as the cable and electric bills and an occasional item like the repair of the washing machine. Setting it up takes just a few keystrokes. Simply go to the credit union's Web site and follow the links. Then when it's time to pay your bills, with just a few more clicks the job is done. The funds are deducted from your credit union checking account based on the timing you prescribe. Online bill pay streamlines your money management chores as well. What are you waiting for? Get started by visiting our Web site at www.mmefcu.org or call the credit union if you have questions or need more information.