

Article for October 29, 2014

Ghosts and ghouls will fill the streets and knock on doors of our citizens' homes. They will come in droves, carloads of little people dressed as someone they really aren't. People will give them candy and treats to keep them at bay.

We know this is Halloween, and we're ready! But are you ready for something you cannot see? As we near the end of "National Cybersecurity Awareness Month (NCSAM)" we need to spend a little time accessing our vulnerability in the cyber world. NCSAM focuses on what emerging and established businesses can do to protect their organizations, customers, and employees. Many of these small and medium-sized businesses become targets for cyber criminals simply because they may not have the awareness or resources to protect themselves. It's up to us to educate ourselves as business people and individuals to protect our assets.

Think quickly of some of the important information on your computer today. Your data may include valuable intellectual property that could be worth much more than you realize. Sensitive personnel or personal data and financial spreadsheets could also be targets for cyber thieves.

The Department of Homeland Security is working to promote the "Stop.Think.Connect." campaign, which encourages us to practice safe internet use. Here are a few quick tips to help you stay cyber safe: Use and regularly update anti-virus and anti-spyware software on all computers; Secure your internet connection by using a firewall, encrypting information and hiding your Wi-Fi network; and Require that employees and household members use strong passwords and regularly change them.

For more information on how to practice good cybersecurity with your business, visit <http://www.dhs.gov/stophinkconnect> and, as always, Be Safe Out There!