

Tralee Times

Caherslee News

Volume 2 No. 4

June 2007

What is Identity theft? Are you at Risk?

*While delivering the latest editions of **Tralee Times** I have come across situations where mail is left in very accessible places i.e. inside open patio doors. Not meaning to be alarmist, but rather to highlight the potential dangers of this practice, I have included some information from the British Home Office website relating to this issue.*

Your identity and personal information are valuable. Criminals can find out your personal details and use them to open bank accounts and get credit cards, loans, state benefits and documents such as passports and driving licenses in your name.

Criminals commit identity theft by stealing your personal information. This is often done by taking documents from your rubbish or by making contact with you and pretending to be from a legitimate organisation. Identity theft can result in fraud affecting your personal financial circumstances, as well as costing government and financial services millions of pounds a year. If your identity is stolen, you may have difficulty getting loans, credit cards or a mortgage until the matter is sorted out. The following tips will help you protect your identity and prevent criminals from committing fraud in your name:

It is particularly helpful to check your personal credit file 2-3 months after you have moved house. Your identity and personal information are valuable assets. Keep them secure.

Be extra careful if you live in a property where other people could have access to your mail. In some cases a bank or credit card company could arrange for you to collect valuable items such as new plastic cards or cheque books from a local branch.

If you move house, tell your bank, card issuer and all other organisations that you deal with immediately. Ask *An Post* to redirect any mail from your old address to your new one for at least a year.

Keep your personal documents in a safe place, preferably in a lockable drawer or cabinet at home. Consider storing valuable financial documents such as share certificates with your bank.

Never give personal or account details to anyone who contacts you unexpectedly. Be suspicious even if they claim to be from your bank or the police. Ask for their phone number, check it is genuine and, if so, call them back. Be aware that a bank will never ask for your PIN or for a whole security number or password. Keep them secure.

Criminals sometimes use the identities of deceased persons to commit fraud, which can be very distressing for those close to the deceased. One way of reducing the chances of this happening is to register with services that remove the deceased's details from mailing lists.

Be Aware!—Be Safe!

Additional information and links for all articles in *Tralee Times* is available on our website
www.traleetimes.com

www.traleetimes.com

We are continuing to update and develop our website. Do visit it and send us your **feedback**. We always appreciate your comments—positive or negative—and we will strive to accommodate your needs, issues, concerns and comments.

Your business, service or trade or even a personal ad. can be included in the website too. Contact us for details. Sports clubs and local organisations can include events and / or results for **Free**.

Contact: Leonard O' Donnell, [Editor]

Tel. 087—76152 76 or

editor@traleetimes.com or

leonardodonnell@eircom.net

Major Problems Accessing Broadband Locally

It is a fact that some housing developments cannot access broadband connections while houses a couple of hundred metre away or in some cases across the road have adequate access to broadband. A recent OECD Broadband Statistic Survey (December 2006) places Ireland in 23rd position out of 30 for broadband connections.

Broadband subscribers per 100 inhabitants, by technology, Dec. 2006 for Ireland:

Connection Type— Ireland	OECD Average
DSL 9.1	DSL 10.5
Cable 1.3	Cable 4.9
Fibre / LAN 0.0	Fibre / LAN 1.1
Other 2.0	Other 0.3
Total Connections 12.5	Total Connections 16.9

According to the data in this OECD Survey Ireland lies ahead of Hungary, Czech Republic, Poland, Slovak Republic, Greece, Turkey and Mexico.

There are (were) 517,300 subscribers in Ireland (Dec. 2006) out of a total of 197,463,934 subscribers in the OECD countries. There is no doubt that this number would increase were broadband access available to more homes.

Even if it were the case that broadband were available in its present format(s) to Irish consumers the speeds available are very slow in comparison to other parts of the world [not to mention prices!]. My research indicates that for a so called developed country we are falling quite a bit behind other regions.

The world's broadband leader is South Korea, where 73% of households subscribe to high-speed Internet. Most Koreans pay \$27 a month for a connection speed of up to 3 megabits. But a few thousand choose to pay \$52 a month for a 20-megabit advanced DSL connection, which is much faster and cheaper than anything available to Americans. Japanese can get some of the fastest and cheapest broadband service in the world -- up to 26 megs for about \$30 a month, using 'souped-up' DSL.

Tralee Times will conduct a local broadband survey during the summer and / or you can contact us with your views.

Why are oil prices so high?

Crude oil prices have risen by about 30% this year to levels not seen since the early 1980s.

The latest rises are causing worries in importing countries about the economic cost of higher energy prices. Higher fuel prices can cause unwelcome rises in inflation, restrict economic growth and are unpopular with voters. Major oil exporters are divided between those such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait that favour lifting output in an attempt to ease prices, and those such as Venezuela that argue against conciliatory moves towards big consumers, principally the US. The price of US-traded light, sweet crude rose in September to more than \$50 a barrel while UK-traded Brent crude from the North Sea rose to \$46 a barrel.

BBC News Online explains why prices are so high.

RISING DEMAND

Global economic expansion is driving what the International Energy Agency says is the biggest increase in oil demand for 24 years. There is higher than expected demand in industrialised countries and China's rapidly expanding economy has created a huge demand boost.

LOW STOCKS

Oil companies have tried to become more efficient in recent years and operate with lower stocks of crude oil. This means there is less of a cushion in the market against supply interruptions.

OPEC STRATEGY

The producers' cartel OPEC accounts for about half of the world's crude oil exports and attempts to keep prices roughly where it wants them by trimming or lifting supplies to the market.

In the past, OPEC ministers tended to wait for prices to dip before agreeing to cut output. But OPEC is now acting more aggressively, announcing production cuts to pre-empt any weakening in prices.

ACTION OF SPECULATORS

The combination of low stocks and Opec action to keep them low leaves the market exposed to the prospect of sudden price rises if supplies are threatened. This has not gone unnoticed by professional market speculators. Hedge funds and other speculators betting on the possibility of higher prices have themselves exacerbated price pressure in the market.

VIOLENCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The world's major oil consumers remain dependent on the Middle East for their oil. Recent violence in Iraq and Saudi Arabia has again raised fears about an interruption to supplies.

Iraqi exports have been cut by sabotage attacks on oil facilities.

OTHER POLITICAL TENSION

Analysts also view political tension in non-Middle East states Nigeria and Venezuela as having the potential to disrupt exports and drive up world prices.

And there have been worries that a dispute between Russia's government and the country's biggest oil company, Yukos, will lead to the shutdown of a good deal of Russia's production.

INSUFFICIENT US REFINERY CAPACITY

Low US gasoline stocks and pressure on US refiners to increase production of new gasoline blends have also helped drive world crude oil prices.

Environmental regulations demand new grades of gasoline, which can vary from state to state.

But building processing facilities to serve so many different markets is expensive and environmental concerns can make planning permission difficult to obtain.

BBC Online article. Full text of this article is available on our website: - www.traleetimes.com.

Road Surfaces—Maintenance and repair

(The following is an explanation of how and why road surfaces need repair and maintenance regularly, courtesy of Kent County Council)

All road surfaces wear out with use. And if the road surface is not treated regularly, the road can become less safe for traffic and more costly to repair.

Work on road surfaces can cause delays for traffic. But regular and careful maintenance work causes fewer delays than full scale repairs - repairs that would be necessary if we didn't carry out regular maintenance.

That's why Kent County Council regularly resurfaces the roads in Kent.

Why do road surfaces wear out?

All types of weather - rain, snow and sunshine - affect road surfaces. And the number of vehicles on the road, and their speed, affect how quickly the road surface deteriorates.

How do we maintain road surfaces?

There are two ways that we can repair and maintain road surfaces:

(i) Surface dressing and (ii) Resurfacing

What is surface dressing?

Surface dressing means spraying a road with a coating of hot bitumen and then covering it with stone chippings. The chippings are rolled into the bitumen to form a water-resistant, protective layer, which make it less slippery.

We do this work in the summer, when the weather is warm and dry, as the bitumen will not stick to the road in cold or wet weather. As soon as the bitumen has set, we sweep the road to remove any loose chippings.

When do we resurface roads?

If a road is too bumpy and needs to be improved, we will resurface it. This means removing an existing surface or applying a new surface on top of an existing one. The new surface will even out bumps, to give a smooth surface that helps to prevent skidding.

A process called planing removes an existing surface. A machine grinds off the old surface, which we take away. We do not waste this material but re-use it in road maintenance. A paver machine applies a new surface. This machine controls the thickness of the surface material, and makes sure bumps and potholes are filled in properly.

What if a road is really bad?

Sometimes we may need to completely dig up and replace a road. This is the most expensive treatment. We keep the costs down as far as possible by carrying out other treatments to help prevent roads from getting so bad that they need to be replaced.

How can You help?

Speed restrictions signs are always important. On newly surfaced roads they are there not only to protect road users and pedestrians, but also to protect the road. Lower speeds help to prevent new road surfaces from being damaged before they have completely set.

Driving at lower speeds will also protect your vehicle, and help prevent damage from loose chippings. When you are driving, you can help by taking notice of road signs (including speed restrictions) on newly surfaced roads. This prevents new materials from being damaged before they have completely set.

Staying within the speed limit will also help prevent your car from being damaged by loose chippings where there has been surface dressing.

What is Solar Energy?

Solar energy is the mother of most renewable energies on earth. The sun powers natural cycles on earth like the wind, water flow and plant growth.

But the sun is also such a reliable source of heat and light that we sometimes take it for granted. Generations have used glass and other materials and structures to capture and magnify the sun's energy and these systems have gradually evolved to form the basis of mature techniques that are used today to harness solar energy.

There are 3 basic approaches used today to gain maximum benefit of solar energy in buildings:

Passive Solar

Passive Solar Architecture is a building design approach which seeks to:

- maximize solar gains in the building (through good orientation and layout, and glazing);
- avoid heat losses through ensuring a high level of insulation and air-tightness of the building;
- ensure a high degree of comfort by using controlled ventilation and daylighting.

For more information, go to

<http://www.passiv.de/>

Download: *Passive Solar Design — Solar Homes Catch the Sun.*

Download: *A buyers' Guide to Low Energy and Passive Houses.*

Active Solar Heating

Active Solar Heating is one of the primary ways for buildings to use solar energy. This technology uses solar collectors to transform sunlight into heat to provide space and/or water heating. Solar water heating is the most common application of active solar thermal in Europe. A correctly sized solar water heating system can cover 50-60% of your hot water heating requirement with free solar energy.

By 2005, over 3,000 households used a solar heating system in Ireland, compared to about 5 million households in Europe.

Download: SEI REIO's Solar Water Heaters leaflet.

Download: A Buyers' Guide to Solar Heating Systems.

Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Systems

'Photovoltaic' means electricity from light. In essence, photovoltaic systems use daylight (not necessarily direct sunlight) to convert solar radiation into electricity. The light which shines on the PV cells creates an electric field causing electricity to flow. The greater the intensity of the light, the greater the flow of electricity.

Photovoltaic systems use semiconductor materials to convert solar energy into electricity. Solar PV can also be used to provide free solar electricity to houses as well as for commercial and industrial applications. **Recommended websites:**

<http://www.leere.energy.gov/solar/photovoltaics.html>

<http://www.pvresources.com>

<http://www.lowcarbonbuildings.org.uk/micro/solarpv/>

Or visit: www.sei.ie the Sustainable Energy Ireland website

Full Text and Links on: www.traletimes.com

Road Safety - Traffic Schemes

In light of the issues of exiting onto the main Caherslee Road and the scourge of speeding traffic on the main road I happened upon this article.

Traffic Management schemes are introduced to solve an identified problem in one or more roads.

The need for a scheme can be identified in a variety of ways. It may, for example, be a bad accident record or the concerns of residents that prompts an investigation. To deal with this, priority is given to the worst problems first.

Potential schemes are assessed against the following policies:

- To achieve safe movement by reducing accident levels.
- To restrain traffic and safeguard the environment.
- To seek equitable levels of mobility and accessibility for all groups of people, particularly for those presently disadvantaged in mobility terms.
- To reduce the impact of commuter parking.
- To improve pedestrian safety, accessibility and convenience.
- To promote cycling.

Consultation

The Council consults residents for their views before the introduction of any new traffic measures. In addition, many traffic measures require the publication of a formal Notice in the press.

Speed Control Humps and Tables "Pillow" or "Cushion" Humps

These are a form of speed control hump

which are wide enough to allow a wide wheelbase vehicle to pass unhindered. Buses or fire engines are not affected by them, whereas a smaller wheelbase vehicle, such as a car, would have to have at least one set of wheels on the hump.

"Chicanes" and "Throttles"

Chicanes and throttles are intended to reduce traffic speed by reducing the available carriageway width throughout a short length.

Kerb Build Outs

At some road junctions visibility is often reduced because of the shape of the road or because of parked cars.

Width Restrictions

Width restriction are a self enforcing means of restricting access for large vehicles. Posts or bollards are placed in the road approx 2.1 metres (7 feet) apart, such that vehicles wider than this cannot pass between them.

One Way Streets, Banned Turns and No Entry

These help control traffic movements, without completely restricting access. They can stop commuter "rat-runs" which occur.

One-way streets often lead to an increase in traffic speed. Some residents find one-way streets and banned movements inconvenient as they may result in reduced levels of access to their homes.

**Full Text available on:
www.traletimes.com**

Aid to Ireland – The Great Famine

http://multitext.ucc.ie/d/Overseas_Aid

The response of people overseas, particularly those of Irish descent and but also those who had no connection with Ireland, was an important part of private relief. The first donation for Irish relief was raised in India at the end of 1845 by British troops serving in Calcutta. It was followed by the formation of the Indian Relief Fund in January 1846 that appealed to British people living in India to begin similar collections. Their appeal raised almost £14,000. The Freemasons of India contributed £5,000 to Ireland. A contribution of £3,000 was also raised in Bombay in the space of just one week. The Government of Barbados gave a donation, partly inspired by a donation given by Ireland to them some years earlier. In 1847 and 1848, committees in Australia raised over £10,000. A portion of money was also set aside to assist emigration from Ireland to Australia, but was eventually returned to the donors because the committee could not decide whether the emigrants to be helped should be paupers or able-bodied emigrants. Other donations came from South Africa (£550); St Petersburg, Russia (£2,644); Constantinople (£620); the islands of Seychelles and Rodrigues (£111 and £16); and Mexico (£652). The geographical range of contributions shows that public interest in relieving the Famine had spread far beyond Ireland and Britain: it had become an event of international significance.

Fastest Growing Population in Europe

The following is an extract from the Manifesto of the Urban Forum (see below). Interesting reading due to the lack of an Area Plan for the Caherslee / Mounthawk area and the issue of the lands at the entrance to Carraigeendaniel.

The population of the Republic of Ireland now stands at over 4.2 million – its highest level for well over a century. The country also has the fastest growing population in Europe, rising at a rate of 2.5% per annum, and it is estimated that our population is likely to increase to over 5 million by 2020 with anywhere between 70,000 to 100,000 immigrants arriving every year.

Community Involvement

Full input from **local communities** in decision making in relation to the built environment is essential to achieve the objective of creating sustainable communities. The **Urban Forum** - which is made up of the five bodies representing the professionals in the Irish construction industry: Engineers Ireland (IEI); Irish Landscape Institute (ILI); Irish Planning Institute (IPI); Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland (RIAI) and the Society of Chartered Surveyors (SCS) - has developed this policy paper to set out a clear agenda for tackling these serious issues during the lifetime of the next Government.

The *Urban Forum* also believes that such participation is one of the key steps in creating a more active citizenry and in developing the country's social capital.

While some local authorities have adopted the Local Area Plan planning mechanism in a creative and effective manner, others have failed because such plans are used primarily to achieve rezoning of individual landholdings with little community involvement.

Plan Led Developments

Local authorities should be encouraged to consider the full implications of re-zoning land, and to prepare comprehensive local plans with coordinated infrastructure provision (including school and other community infrastructure) where lands are zoned for development. Such plans can include Strategic Development Zones (SDZs) like Adamstown, or Local Area Plans, Framework or Masterplans. This may also require new structures for the delivery of infrastructure in particular water services.

Protect and Enhance Urban Landscapes

Protection of our current stock of urban parks is required by securing public ownership or revision of the open space zoning parameters. Our urban parks should be enhanced through specific and adequate funding for new recreational facilities to counteract, for example, our growing trend towards childhood obesity and reinforce this through the establishment of national recreational guidelines. In addition, enhancement of urban greening initiatives is necessary, especially for inner city locations to balance the negative environmental issues of increased urban development.

From the Manifesto of The Urban Forum — which is made up of the five bodies representing the professionals in the Irish construction industry: Engineers Ireland (IEI); Irish Landscape Institute (ILI); Irish Planning Institute (IPI); Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland (RIAI) and the Society of Chartered Surveyors (SCS). **Full Text: www.traleetimes.com**

Valentia Observatory—May 2007 so far (26th May)

In 2006, I'm sure most of you remember that the weather was rather inclement.

Rainfall for that month was 208.2 mm.(4th wettest month in 2006). This year to date the rainfall is 45.1 mm (average for May 1961—1990 is 88.5 mm).

Rainfall amounts for Jan.-May. 2006 were 15.74% **above** average while this year it is at 10.69% **below** the average. This periods amount is only **77.16%** of the same period last year.

Temperatures for May 2006 averaged 11.0°C, however so far this month it averages at 12.2°C (average for May 1961—1990 = 10.9°C)

See: www.traleetimes.com for more weather details

ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS, TRADE OR SERVICE FROM €10 per MONTH

www.traleetimes.com

CONTACT US FOR DETAILS

World History on www.traleetimes.com

May 18th : 1980 Mount St. Helens erupts

At 8:32 a.m. PDT, Mount St. Helens, a volcanic peak in southwestern Washington, suffers a massive eruption, killing 57 people and devastating some 210 square miles of wilderness. Called Louwala-Clough, or "the Smoking Mountain," by Native Americans, Mount St. Helens is located in the Cascade Range and stood 9,680 feet before its eruption. The volcano has erupted periodically during the last 4,500 years, and the last active period was between 1831 and 1857. On March 20, 1980, noticeable volcanic activity began again with a series of earth tremors centered on the ground just beneath the north flank of the mountain. These earthquakes escalated, and on March 27th a minor eruption occurred, and Mount St. Helens began emitting steam and ash through its crater and vents.

Full Text on this and other Historical Events on: www.traleetimes.com

Multicultural Education

"Multicultural education is a field of study and an emerging discipline whose major aim is to create equal educational opportunities for students from diverse racial, ethnic, social-class, and cultural groups. One of its important goals is to help all students to acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to function effectively in a pluralistic democratic society and to interact, negotiate, and communicate with peoples from diverse groups in order to create a civic and moral community that works for the common good." (Banks and Banks 1995)

Full Text: www.traleetimes.com

Contact Us if you would like to share your views or ideas, issues and concerns.

Also if you would like us to research and publish some article that you have an interest in.

Motorists—it is easier to avoid uneven or potholed surfaces when you reduce your speed !

Summer holidays from school = more children on our roads, be aware and take !

Contact details for all the local services in the Tralee area, including voluntary organisations, sports and leisure clubs, schools, County and Town Council departments, local politicians, churches etc..etc..... are available on our website: **www.traleetimes.com**

All content of Tralee Times is available on our website:

www.traleetimes.com

© Tralee Times 2007. Editor: Leonard O' Donnell