

# Happy Cybersecurity Awareness Month

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October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month! We have several tips to keep your IT environment safe and secure.

In the spirit of Cybersecurity Awareness Month, we recommend using strong passwords, turning on 2-Factor authentication, updating software and being cautious about clicking on links or QR codes in emails.

When setting a password, we suggest the following<sup>1</sup>:

1. Create a unique password for every service or app that you use.
2. Use a mix of upper and lower case, symbols, numbers, and special characters.
3. Never use your name or phone number or easy-to-find information in a password.
4. Don't share your passwords, save them in web browsers, or write them down.
5. Passwords should have 8+ characters minimum – longer is better!

2-Factor authentication (2FA) is identity and access management that requires 2 forms of verification to login into your computer and apps. Some methods of verification are hardware tokens, text messaging, push notifications on your cell phone, email notifications, and voice-based authentication (Google "my voice is my passport"! ). Any of these combined with a password will make it really difficult to compromise your information<sup>2</sup>. Always use 2FA when logging into your computer, email, important websites, or apps on your phone with any sensitive information.

Out-of-date software on your desktop, laptop or cell phone can pose real security risks.

Updating your software fixes security vulnerabilities to prevent hackers from taking control of your phone and computer. It will also protect sensitive data including social security numbers, credit card numbers, banking information, and medical information<sup>3</sup>.

We get lots of email every day and it's hard to not be distracted. Clicking on a link with tracking information for that shipment you were expecting or following a QR code to update your email password can be done so quickly. But before you click on that link or follow that QR Code, ALWAYS "Stop, Look and Think"<sup>4</sup> You don't want to download that virus to your computer or phone!

At Egis IT Security, we use a variety of products and services to help make your IT environment safe and secure. These include tools for password management, 2-Factor authentication, software update management, and security awareness training. We are eager to be your Cybersecurity vendor - please contact us today!

<sup>1</sup> <https://bitwarden.com/blog/how-strong-is-my-password>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/security/business/security-101/what-is-two-factor-authentication-2fa>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.techtarget.com/whatis/feature/5-reasons-software-updates-are-important>

<sup>4</sup> <https://blog.knowbe4.com/teach-two-things-to-decrease-phishing-attack-success>