

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi

The Island University

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University Sending Precautionary Advisory Regarding Security Incident; Puts Plans in Place to Secure Data on Computing Systems

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas – Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi officials are notifying individuals and initiating computer security measures following the recent discovery that there was a possibility files containing personal data of some admissions applicants in January and February 2005 could have been viewed.

The files included 1,430 names with social security numbers. The University stopped using social security numbers for student identification in August 2007.

Texas A&M-Corpus Christi became aware of the files on Monday, Nov. 3, when a student discovered her information in a document accessed through a Web search. The University immediately ceased public access to the document and initiated a security investigation.

Although Texas A&M-Corpus Christi believes there to be only a low risk of identity theft, it is sending a precautionary advisory to persons it can locate. The discovered files did not contain mailing addresses, e-mail addresses or additional personal information.

Data security is taken very seriously at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, and the university regrets this incident. The University's computing system and employee computers include millions of files, which are scanned on a periodic basis to locate, remove and/or encrypt sensitive data. Immediate steps to further secure the integrity of data within its computers are being taken, including acquisition of a user-friendly software tool to ensure that University employees can easily scan their work computers for sensitive data.

The University is obtaining outside expertise to conduct a review of information technology security practices and make recommendations to immediately remedy any vulnerabilities. An Information Technology Oversight Group is also being formed to review IT operations and make recommendations for improvements.

The University has a Web site on information security and identity theft for individuals who may have concerns regarding the discovered data. The “ID Security Resources” site can be accessed at <http://idsecurity.tamucc.edu>.

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