
FBI to investigate US Steel pensioners records theft

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Pittsburgh Post Gazette reported that the pension fund for retired nonunion employees of US Steel is alerting participants that their personal information could end up on the internet because of the theft of patient records from Express Scripts, its medical benefits management company.

US Steel & Carnegie Pension Fund, in a letter sent to pensioners, said that it is unaware of any information being accessed or misused. But, the fund said, "It is possible that the information in possession of the thieves may include your name, date of birth, Social Security number and prescription drug information."

Since October 2008, the FBI has been investigating an extortion letter sent early that month to Express Scripts Inc. The company works with about 1,600 companies, US Steel among them. The extortion letter contained the personal information of 75 people and threatened to expose millions of records online unless an extortion demand was met. The amount of the demand has not been disclosed.

Express Scripts made the threat public in early November 2008 and about a week later revealed that a small number of its clients had since received similar extortion letters. The identity of those clients has not been revealed.

A spokeswoman for US Steel would say only that the fund was contacted by Express Scripts and has notified its participants of the potential danger. She referred all other questions to Express.

Mr Steve Littlejohn spokesman of US Steel said that he could not discuss details of the investigation, including whether the extortion letters were sent by mail or e mail or whether investigators believe someone inside the company stole the data. But, he said, there is "no evidence of any personal information being misused at this point."

He said that US Steel is cooperating with the FBI, has notified affected members and has established a USD 1 million reward for anyone who provides information leading to the conviction of the culprits.

US Steel also has contracted with New York-based Kroll Inc to provide identity theft restoration services for members who may become victims.

At least one US Steel pensioner expressed concern that the letter he received made no mention of a credit monitoring service of the type provided by West Penn Allegheny Health System last year, when a laptop containing the records of 42,000 patients was stolen from a nurse in a burglary.

US Steel said in its letter that "We believe it is important for you to be aware of this situation so that you may be watchful for any fraudulent activity in your name."

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