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May. 17, 2013

The city of Akron on Friday morning notified citizens whose sensitive information, possibly including Social Security numbers and credit card numbers, was compromised in a cyber attack and posted on the Internet.

Deputy Mayor Rick Merolla confirmed in an email that “we notified everyone on the list and gave some tips and resources they can use.”

Merolla said city of Akron officials were meeting Friday with the FBI to determine their next steps after the city's website and internal systems were hacked by a Turkish group Thursday.

In a news release the city issued just after noon, officials said, “It is clear that the cyber attackers (a group named Turkish Ajan) accessed a section of the City's taxpayer files and created a list of nearly 8,000 taxpayers' names, addresses and Social Security numbers, and posted this information on the Internet.

“The City has contacted by email those individuals whose information was compromised. If you do not get notification and you want to confirm whether your information was compromised, you can call 3-1-1 (330-375-2311 from a mobile phone) or the City's income tax office at 330-375-2290.

“If you are on the list of individuals whose information was released, the FBI recommends that at this point, you monitor all your financial accounts very carefully until we have more information.”

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The Beacon Journal will not provide information where the hacked files may be found online in order to protect possible victims.

The hacked files were posted on a website and appear to include spreadsheets. One file has more than 31,000 entries with names, Social Security numbers and addresses. Another file has account numbers and Social Security numbers.

In total, it appears that there are 47,452 entries in the various files. The vast majority of the entries appear to be individuals and their personal information. One file appears to be tax preparations companies.

Some of the information is partial and some appears to have full names, addresses and Social Security numbers. It is unknown if there are duplicates in the files.

The city of Akron shared these tips with citizens to help them protect their credit:

—The Identity Theft Resource Center, a nonprofit agency in San Diego, offers free victim assistance at 888-400-5530 or online at www.idtheftcenter.org.

—The Ohio Attorney General's Consumer Identity Theft Unit can assist consumers after they've been ID theft victims by helping them straighten out accounts. Also, the office can provide a self-help assistance guide. A police report must be filed. Call 800-282-0515 or go to www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov.

—Your homeowner's insurance might include ID theft coverage. If not, you might be able to add that coverage

—You can also contact one of the credit report services and put a freeze on your credit:

— Equifax: 800-685-1111 (Option 3), Equifax Security Freeze, P.O. Box 105788, Atlanta, GA 30348 or www.equifax.com.

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