



## How to protect yourself against Home Title Theft



Most homeowners usually see their house as one of their most significant investments. Unfortunately, your home's value also draws the attention of thieves looking to scam you for your equity. Homeowners who experience identity theft are especially vulnerable to home title theft, as their financial information is in criminals' hands. Here's how you can avoid home title theft or report it if you suspect a thief is using your financial information.

### 1. Keep Track Of All Bills And Homeowner Mail

Staying on top of the consistent flow of typical bills, such as utilities and mortgage payment notices, is crucial for homeowners to stay in good financial standing. If specific bills stop arriving or you receive mortgage paperwork that seems unfamiliar, it may be a sign that someone could be tampering with your home title. Therefore, keeping track of your homeowner mail is vital to preventing theft and fraud.

### 2. Check Your Credit Report

Frequently checking your credit report is an excellent practice for financial health. In addition, homeowners can scan their reports for suspicious activity. For example, a new loan or lender you don't recognize requires further investigation, as it could be a sign of a scam. You can also pay for a monitoring service to provide constant vigilance for your credit reports.

### 3. Check your property

Periodically contact your local County Recorder's office or title company and check for any unknown recordings on your property.

### 3. Your Homeowner's Title Insurance Policy

YES, most homeowners purchased a Title Insurance Policy when they acquired their property which guarantees the title is clear. An ALTA Homeowners Policy offers protection should any fraudulent recordings occur after the policy was purchased. Title insurance comes in two forms: lenders and homeowners. When you buy a home, your lender will mandate your purchase of a lender's policy to ensure there are no liens against the home you're buying. In other words, the lender's policy helps guarantee the sale is legitimate and provides repayment to the lender if it isn't. Contrarily, homeowners title insurance policy protects you as the homeowner. If unforeseen liens or financial claims come against your home, your policy will pay for legal fees and defend your right to stay in your home\*. This protection includes fending off fraudulent claims against your homeownership.

Contact us for more information.

\* Chicago Title will defend Your Title in any legal action only as to that part of the action which is based on the Covered Risk and which is not excepted or excluded from coverage in this Policy. We will pay the costs, attorneys' fees, and expenses we incur in that defense. We will not pay for any part of the legal action which is not based on a Covered Risk or which is excepted or excluded from coverage in our Homeowners Policy. ©2023 Chicago Title Company.