

A large, light blue, irregularly shaped graphic element with a scalloped or wavy border, centered on the page. It serves as a background for the main title text.

# **PROTECTING YOURSELF WHILE SHOPPING ONLINE**

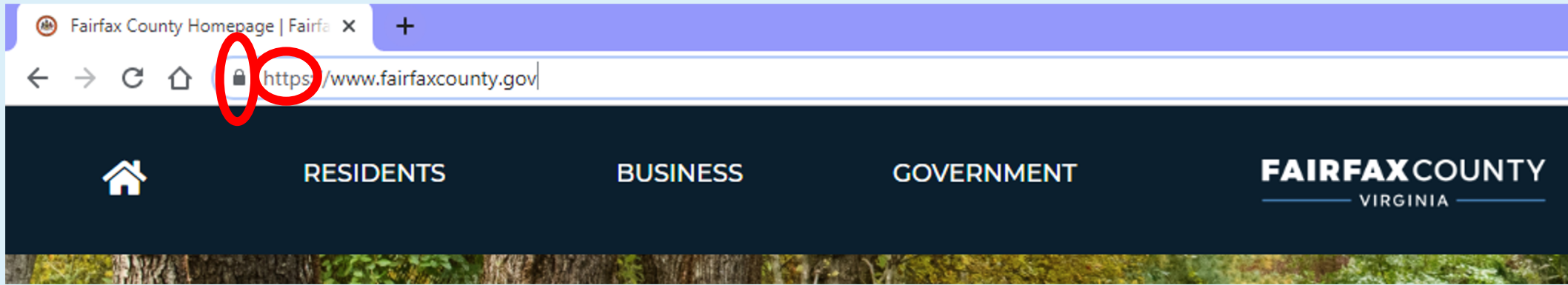
**DEPARTMENT OF CABLE AND CONSUMER SERVICES**

# ONLINE SHOPPING TIPS

- Shop with who you trust
- Make sure the website is secure
- Check the Privacy Policy to find out how your information will be used
- Check return policy
- Account Creation and Passwords
- Always **ONLY** use a credit card
- **NEVER** give bank account information

# SHOP WHERE YOU TRUST

- Consider doing online shopping only with retailers that you trust and have shopped with before. Check for those security features.
- Anyone can set up a fabricated business page online under almost any name. Confirm the seller's physical address and phone number in case you have any questions or problems.
- If you get an email or pop-up message that asks for your financial information while you are browsing, do not reply or follow the link. Legitimate companies do not ask for information that way.



- Check for the lock icon as seen above. This shows that your connection is secure.
- Make sure the site has https: This indicates that you are on a secure website.  
Unfortunately, there are still some fraudulent websites that have forged security icons but these measures are typically accurate.



NESS

GOVERNMENT

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### Connection is secure

Your information (for example, passwords or credit card numbers) is private when it is sent to this site.

[Learn more](#)



Flash

Allow

Allowed by your administrator



Certificate (Valid)

Issued to: County of Fairfax [US]



Cookies (33 in use)



Site settings



quality of life for people,



[Awards](#)



[Site Feedback](#)

#### Main Address

12000 Government Center Pkwy  
Fairfax, VA 22035

#### Phone

703-324-7329

TTY 711

#### Site Tools

[Website Accessibility](#)

[Translate](#)

[Download Mobile App](#)

#### Support

[ADA Accessibility](#)

[FOIA Requests](#)

[Website Administrator](#)

#### Additional Resources

[Fairfax County Public Schools](#)

[Economic Development Authority](#)

[Visit Fairfax](#)

[Council of Governments](#)

[Commonwealth of Virginia](#)

[USA.gov](#)



[PRIVACY POLICY & COPYRIGHT](#)



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SERVICES

CONNECT

SEARCH



Share

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We do not capture personal information without visitors' permission.

## ANONYMOUS VISITOR INFORMATION COLLECTION

For every visitor to our site, there are several common pieces of information that we do collect that are stored in logs. Internet Protocol (IP) address, browser type, operating system, the date and time of the visit, and the addresses to which a visitor linked during a visit to our Website are all recorded. We use a third-party service to collect data about where visitors click on some of our pages so we can improve content placement on the Website. We cannot and do not associate any of this information with individual persons, distribute this information, or use it in any manner other than for statistical analysis in improving our site to better serve our visitors.

## COOKIES

We do not use cookies to record any personal information. Cookies are used by some County web applications to pass needed information from one page to the next. These applications use the cookies to track the session through randomly generated ID numbers that cannot be traced back to any personal or private information. Rejecting a cookie in these applications will render the application useless.

## WEATHER DISCLAIMER



# Return Policy

- Check the stores return policy- sometimes the in-store return policy is different than the online return policy. Do not assume that they are the same.
- Final Sales are typically unable to be returned.
- Seasonal Merchandise sometimes cannot be returned.
- Are there fees for returning merchandise? Restocking fees?



# PASSWORDS

Company websites may require you set up an account to make a purchase. The business will store information like your name, address, email, etc. This can be beneficial if you plan to shop with them in the future. To secure the information you provide consider creating a strong password. Be careful about allowing the business to store credit card information for future use.

- Long phrases (at least 8 characters) with capital letters, numbers, and symbols are the strongest
  - l<3Myd0g\$kIp
  - “I love my husband and my dog” to iLmh&mD7#4%”
  - Avoid common words, birthdays, addresses, anniversaries, etc.

# Pay by Credit Card

- When you use a credit or charge card your transaction will be protected by the Fair Credit Billing Act.
- Some credit card companies guarantee that you won't be held responsible for any unauthorized charges made to your card online.
- Some credit card companies provide additional warranty, return, and purchase protection benefits.
- Routinely check your credit card statements to ensure all charges are valid.

# FAKE SHIPPING NOTIFICATIONS

When waiting for your purchases to arrive, beware of emails pretending to be from businesses like UPS, FedEx or major retailers with links to package tracking information. Avoid clicking on links or opening attachments to emails until you have confirmed that they are not malicious. These can have attachments or links to sites that will download malware on your computer to steal your identity and your passwords. Don't be fooled by a phishing scam.

# WHO TO CALL TO REPORT SHOPPING FRAUD?

Federal Trade Commission

<https://www.ftc.gov/>

1-877-382-4357

Fairfax County Consumer Affairs Branch

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/consumer/>

703-222-8435

Better Business Bureau

<https://www.bbb.org>

202-393-8000

# CONSUMER AFFAIRS

Fairfax County Consumer Affairs  
12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 433  
Fairfax, Virginia 22035  
703-222-8435, TTY 711



[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cableconsumer](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cableconsumer)  
[consumer@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:consumer@fairfaxcounty.gov)