



## Valley restaurant tosses years worth of sensitive information in dumpster

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azfamily.com

Posted on May 18, 2010 at 10:15 PM

Updated Monday, Jun 28 at 12:08 PM

TEMPE - "Last name Taylor, first name Gary, social security number 569..."

Tom Rezler is a business owner in this Tempe shopping center and can't believe what he recently found in nearby garbage dumpsters.

Thousands of pages of sensitive information apparently disposed of by a neighboring business called The Vine Tavern and Eatery.

"As a patron of the Vine and having used my credit card hundreds of times in there, I'm a little upset that my information is now privy to anyone that can find this stuff," Rezler said.

The documents included people's names, social security numbers and dates of birth from restaurant applications.

There were checks with banking information and also credit card receipts from Vine customers, receipts that revealed a person's entire credit card number.

Tom called Tempe police, but says he was told it's not illegal to dump such sensitive information.

"And so I said well, I'm going to call 3 On Your Side," he said.

"I think it's horrendous. It puts the general public at the mercy of ID criminals out there," Deputy County Attorney Maryann McKessy said.

3 On Your Side took one box of the documents and showed it to the Fraud and Identity Theft Bureau at the Maricopa County Attorney's Office.

McKessy says such information would be a goldmine for identity thieves.

“They have patterns that they follow, they know companies that employ these kinds of practices and they make it their purpose to on a weekly basis to check those dumpsters. They know where to find that information and they know who abuses this,” she said.

McKessy says businesses should shred employee and customer information, but many don't.

“So I think they would rather turn a blind eye, dump it, hope it doesn't get discovered and go about their business as usual,” she said.

3 On Your Side tried contacting The Vine several times, but no one ever returned our phone calls.

However, when a company called EZ Shredding Solutions heard about the dumpsters full of information, it immediately came out and shredded everything absolutely free.

Paper by paper, document by document, EZ Shredding Solutions destroyed all the personal documents in these dumpsters.

That's a small piece of mind for Tom Rezler, who still worries his credit card information may already out there.

“It's shocking that this is not a crime,” he said.

Meantime, after an hour of shredding, 3 On Your Side has destroyed the sensitive information in the box we kept.

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