

BUSINESS EXTRA

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FDIC Awards 'Outstanding' CRA Rating to First Bank

First Bank received the highest possible rating from the FDIC for its most recent performance under the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA). The Community Reinvestment Act of 1977 requires federally insured deposit-taking institutions to support the borrowing needs of all the communities where they do business, including low- and moderate-income areas. Less than 5% of banks nationwide earned that distinction in 2011. This is the sixth "Outstanding" rating awarded to First Bank.

The "Outstanding" rating is based on First Bank's performance under the lending, investment and service tests. These tests examine mortgage, small business and community development lending, community development investments and community development services in the communities the bank serves. First Bank's area encompasses Southeast Alaska.

"First Bank is committed to the vitality and success of the customers and communities we serve throughout

"We are honored to receive this rating, which represents that commitment and reflects the successful community partnerships that we have formed over the years."

- Michael Medford, Vice President of First Bank

Southeast Alaska," comments Michael Medford, Vice President and Community Reinvestment Officer for First Bank. He also added, "We are honored to receive this rating, which represents that commitment and reflects the successful community partnerships that we have formed over the years, which allow the bank to serve a vital role in the community and economic development of our markets."

The CRA evaluation made specific references to First Bank's strengths, including its lending efforts to small businesses and participation in community development. Since the last CRA rating, First Bank originated 44 community development loans for more than \$60 million to affordable housing and economic development projects. First Bank staff and directors have also participated in 2,392 service hours directly relating to community development and economic development.

For more information, visit www.FirstBankAK.com.





Guard Against Identity Theft in Tax Season

An estimated 9 million Americans are affected by identity theft each year, according to the Federal Trade Commission. Although identity theft stems from a single crime (the stealing of personal information), it can take many forms. You may have heard of thieves stealing a person's PIN (personal identification number) to access a bank account or perhaps you've read about new phone scams, called vishing, in which individuals are tricked into revealing personal data, such as credit card numbers. In the spring, tax season gives criminals a new slew of opportunities for identity theft.

STAY ONE STEP AHEAD

Besides your account and credit card numbers, another piece of information coveted by identity thieves is your Social Security number. A recent trend in identity theft involves using a person's Social Security number to illegally file tax returns. Your tax record includes highly confidential information, including your full name, Social Security number, place of employment and annual income, which should only be accessed by you or a trusted tax advisor.

In the wrong hands, your Social Security number can be used by another person to obtain employment. In this case, income that is not your own will be reported to the IRS and it may appear that you didn't report all your income on your tax return. Thieves can also use your Social Security number to file an early tax return and steal your refund.

By taking certain precautions, such as keeping your Social Security card in a safe place, asking questions before giving out the number and choosing a reputable tax consultant, you can help keep your tax records private.

HOW TO RESPOND

If you receive a notice from the IRS that shows discrepancies in your tax record, call the number listed in the letter for assistance. If identity theft is the root of the problem, the IRS will create a plan to help you resolve the issue.



What Does Your Credit Score Say about You?

Whether you are looking to buy a car, refinance a mortgage or rent an apartment for the first time, your credit score can tell a lot about your financial history. Your FICO® score is a number formulated based on your credit history. It helps lenders evaluate your credit risk. Several factors go into your score, including payment history, amounts owed, length of credit history and types of credit used.

What's a Good Credit Score?

Your FICO score is rated on a scale of 300-850. You want a high score, because a good credit rating can help you obtain better rates on all of the major purchases that life brings, including a car, home and credit cards.

To improve your credit score, follow these tips:

- 1 Keep current on all your payments.** This is the biggest thing you can do to boost your credit score. Be sure to pay your bills on time each and every month.
- 2 Avoid closing old accounts.** It diminishes your total credit available and can raise your credit utilization ratio.
- 3 Don't open new accounts.** This can look like you plan to borrow a lot of money, which could stretch your finances too thin.
- 4 Settle all fines and tickets.** An outstanding library fine or parking ticket can reduce your score if a collection agency gets involved.
- 5 Check your credit report for errors.** Your credit score is based on the information included in your credit report, so it pays to review it for inaccuracies. Federal law entitles you to a free copy of your report once every 12 months from each of the three major credit bureaus. Your credit score is also available for an additional charge. Simply go to www.annualcreditreport.com or call **877-322-8228**.

For more information on how First Bank can help you with your financial needs, call **800-478-6101** or visit **www.FirstBankAK.com** for more information.

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