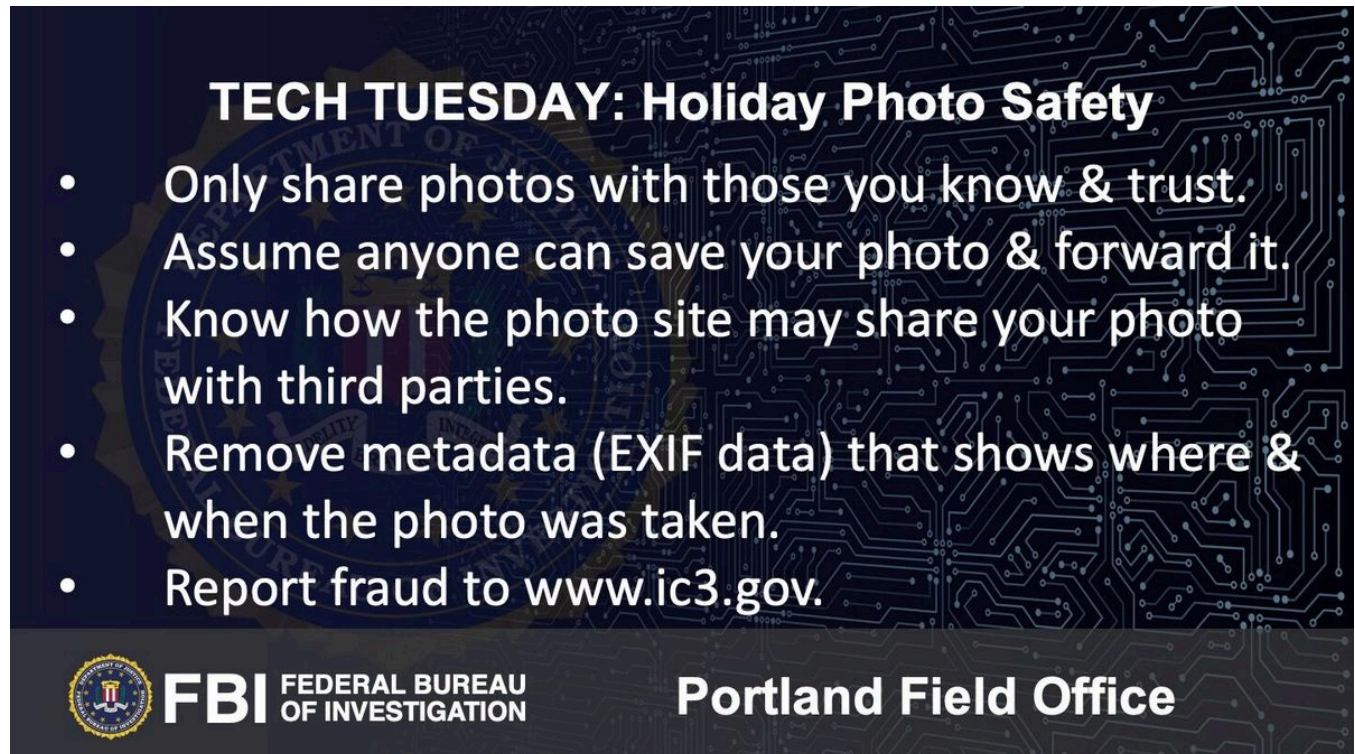


Tech Tuesday: Building a Digital Defense Against Holiday Photo Scams

December 21, 2021

A graphic with a dark blue background featuring a circuit board pattern. In the center, a large, faint, circular seal of the Federal Bureau of Investigation is visible. The text is white and bold. The title 'TECH TUESDAY: Holiday Photo Safety' is at the top. Below it is a bulleted list of five safety tips. At the bottom left is the FBI logo and the text 'FBI FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION'. At the bottom right is the text 'Portland Field Office'.

TECH TUESDAY: Holiday Photo Safety

- Only share photos with those you know & trust.
- Assume anyone can save your photo & forward it.
- Know how the photo site may share your photo with third parties.
- Remove metadata (EXIF data) that shows where & when the photo was taken.
- Report fraud to www.ic3.gov.

 **FBI** FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Portland Field Office

Welcome to the Oregon FBI's Tech Tuesday segment. Today: Building a digital defense with photo sharing sites.

'Tis the time of year when we load up our cameras with shots of little ones all snug in their PJ's, while visions of Santa cause them to run around like crazy fools.

Of course, you want to share those pics with friends and family. The goal is to do so safely.

Apple (iOS Photos) and Google (Google Photos) are two of the most common platforms to use, but there are any number of sharing options including Snapchat, Pinterest, Imgur, Flickr, and more.

No matter the platform you use, here are some safety considerations to keep in mind:

- Only share photos with people you know and trust. Assume that anyone can see, save a copy, and forward photos you post online.

- Make sure that your mother-in-law (and everyone else you send it to) knows whether it is ok or not to re-share that photo. Likewise, make sure you are comfortable with whatever security (or lack of security) the recipients have on their profiles.
- If you are concerned about big data services tracking you or identifying you, avoid posting or tagging images that clearly show faces. Select pictures taken at a distance, at an angle, or otherwise disguised.
- Remember that even if you restrict your data from public view, the service still has access to your data and may share it with third parties.
- Remove the metadata from the photo that tells people where and when the photo was taken. No need to give strangers your home address. For information on how to remove metadata (called EXIF data), **[click here](#)**.

If you are the victim of an online scam, you should report the incident to the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center at **www.ic3.gov** or call your FBI local office.