

# Security Corner

## Safe Travels!

By Patrick King,  
MCU Information Security Officer



If you're headed out for a Fall getaway or even thinking ahead to holiday travel (which will be here before you know it!), it's important to keep yourself and your information safe. A lot of resources are available that are aimed at being helpful for travelers, but can also put you at unnecessary risk. Here are a few tips to help you protect yourself:

**Avoid Recharging Stations** Airports regularly have shared charging stations for your phone or tablet, and hotel rooms have USB ports on the desks and lamps. These stations and ports are well-intentioned, but people can attach hidden malicious hardware that can see and steal your information. It's best to bring your own portable charger. If that's not an option try to use a wall-outlet plug for charging since there's no way of knowing whether or not a publicly accessible charging port has been tampered with.

**Steer Clear of Public Computers** Hotels will often provide a computer in the lobby or business center. If you don't need to use that computer, don't. You can't know or trust what's installed, and you can do mostly everything on your own phone or tablet. If you do find a need for it, don't enter any personal information or visit any sites that require a username and password. Keyloggers and malware are hard to detect, so anything you type on those keyboards or any site you connect to might be recorded.

**Delete Synced Information from Rental Cars** You may find it helpful to connect your phone to the rental car for hands-free calling and GPS navigation. When doing that the car will often sync other information, including your contacts and text messages. Remember to disconnect and delete all information before returning the car so that the next driver does not have access to that information.

**Share Carefully!** Sharing your trip on social media can be part of the fun but be careful what you share and with whom. If your social media account shares posts publicly you may be advertising to criminals that you are away from home. The best thing to do is to wait to share photos and stories once you're home, but if you do want to share and interact in real time be sure you know and trust the people you are sharing with.

*The Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) has published a 'Cybersecurity While Traveling Tip Card' that provides additional information. available on their website.*



## Is a Fixed Annuity Your Best Option?

Financial advisors often designate October (and April) as CD replacement months, offering an opportunity to review clients' portfolios and discuss whether CDs are still the best fit for their financial goals. In the current economic environment, some banks and credit unions are offering less than 1 percent interest on a 6-month CD.

Certificate of Deposits (CDs) are primarily suited for short term investments. Alternatives to CDs are Fixed Annuities which are offered by Life Insurance companies. These products offer a guaranteed fixed yield for specified maturities, very similar to CDs. The maturity period is the length of time beyond which there are no surrender charges due upon liquidating the policy. Fixed Annuities generally offer maturity periods ranging from 3 to 10 years. Although CDs and Fixed Annuities share many similar characteristics, there are some key differences:<sup>1,2</sup>

**Interest Accumulation** – Interest earned on a Certificate of Deposit is considered taxable income and is generally taxed annually at your ordinary income tax rate, even if the CD has not yet matured. A Fixed Annuity offers tax-deferred growth meaning the interest is not taxed until withdrawn.

**Interest Rates** – Many Insurance Companies offer Fixed Annuities with higher rates of return when compared to CD offerings with similar maturities.

**Insurance** – CDs are insured by the FDIC or NCUA up to \$250,000. Fixed Annuities are backed by the financial strength of the Insurance Company issuing the annuity.

Consider exploring all of your options with a financial advisor and tax professional before renewing your CD and weigh the benefits of adding a multi-year Fixed Annuity to your diversified financial portfolio.

Sources: <sup>1</sup>newyorklife.com; <sup>2</sup>annuity123.com



Joseph D. Murphy  
Financial Advisor

Securities and advisory services are offered through LPL Financial (LPL), a registered investment advisor and broker/dealer (member FINRA/SIPC). Insurance products are offered through LPL or its licensed affiliates. Millbury Federal Credit Union (MCU) and MCU Investment Services are not registered as a broker/dealer or investment advisor. Registered representatives of LPL offer products and services using MCU Investment Services, and may also be employees of MCU. These products and services are being offered through LPL or its affiliates, which are separate entities from and not affiliates of MCU or MCU Investment Services. Securities and insurance offered through LPL or its affiliates are:

Not Insured by NCUA or Any Other Government Agency

Not Credit Union Guaranteed

Not Credit Union Deposits or Obligations

May Lose Value