New York Post, Thursd

Get a safety 'Net

How to foil snoops under new Web rules

By DANIKA FEARS

There are limited ways consumers can protect themselves from having their Web histories collected and sold by their Internet service providers, who are about to get government-sanctioned free reign over their Internet traffic.

The White House said Wednesday that President Trump plans to sign a repeal of the Obama administration's broadband-privacy rules, which would have required companies to get consent from consumers before they sell their sensitive information to other companies.

"The market for Internet users' data is extremely opaque," explained Peter Eckersley, the chief computer scientist at the Electronic Frontier Foundation.

"ISPs are making billions of dollars every year by selling data about their customers, but we don't know which ISPs, and how much they're selling, and which kind of data is fetching the highest prices, because all those transactions are conducted in secret."

He warned that even voluntarily "opting out" of targeted advertising with an ISP doesn't mean that a user's data isn't being tracked.

But consumers have some options for shielding their browsing history from broadband providers.

AP

Internet shield

Here's what you can do to help protect your browsing history from Internet service providers:

- **Use a virtual private network**
  A VPN encrypts your Web traffic, making it impossible for an ISP to see the sites you've visited. A good VPN can cost around $10 a month.
- **Use a Tor browser**
  It's slower than your regular browser, but a Tor will bounce your Web traffic around so it can't be traced back to you. It can be complex to set up.
- **Download HTTPS Everywhere**
  Internet providers will still be able to see which sites you've visited, but this extension from the Electronic Frontier Foundation will make browsing more secure and private.
- **Download Privacy Badger**
  This browser extension allows users to block advertisers and Web sites that may be secretly tracking browsing activities.

Laptop users can install software like "HTTPS Everywhere" and "Privacy Badger," and use that in addition to a Tor browser, a downloadable network that allows people to surf the Web anonymously.

"Tor browser is a very secure tool that bounces your traffic several times around the world before it goes to your destination," he said. "It's a little slower than your regular browser but much more private."

Web surfers willing to pony up a few extra bucks for privacy can also purchase a VPN, or virtual private network, which encrypts traffic so browsing history can't be traced.

Of course, some VPN companies can track users' history themselves, and potentially sell that to companies, so customers should do their homework before purchasing one.

Eckersley warned that the new resolution rolling back privacy protections essentially gives broadband providers the greenlight to "go full steam ahead and do maximum tracking."

JCC 'bomb-threat' journo tossed in jail

The disgraced journalist accused of phoning in fake bomb threats at Jewish centers was hauled into Manhattan federal court Wednesday and ordered held without bail.

Juan Thompson, 32, who was booted from his job as a reporter for The Intercept for making up stories, is charged with calling in at least eight bomb threats to Jewish organizations in Manhattan, Dallas, Michigan and San Diego.

Authorities said the St. Louis native went on the anti-Semitic campaign in retaliation against a girlfriend who'd dumped him.

In an attempt to trick authorities into believing the ex-gal pal was framing him, he allegedly sent a February e-mail to a Jewish community center in Manhattan threatening a "Jewish Newtown," referring to the 2012 elementary-school massacre in Newtown, Conn.

Thompson also sent an e-mail to the Anti-Defamation League's national office in Manhattan last month, claiming his girlfriend was behind the bomb threats, authorities said.

"She lives in nyc and is making more bomb threats tomorrow," the e-mail read.

Thompson's lawyer declined to seek bail at this time. *Priscilla DeGregory and Lia Eustachewich*