



MULLEN
COUGHLIN^{LLC}
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December 10, 2024

VIA E-MAIL

Office of the Attorney General
Attn: Security Breach Notification
200 St. Paul Place
Baltimore, MD 21202
E-mail: idtheft@oag.state.md.us

Re: Notice of Data Event

To Whom It May Concern:

We represent American Welding & Gas, Inc. ("American Welding"), located at 4900 Falls of Neuse Road, Suite 150, Raleigh, NC 27609, and are writing to notify your Office of an incident that may affect the security of information relating to one Maryland resident. The investigation into this matter is ongoing, and this notice may be supplemented with any new significant facts learned subsequent to its submission. By providing this notice, American Welding does not waive any rights or defenses regarding the applicability of Maryland law, the applicability of the Maryland data event notification statute, or personal jurisdiction.

Nature of the Data Event

On or about August 15, 2024, American Welding identified suspicious activity related to certain computer systems. American Welding immediately took steps to secure its systems and launched an investigation to determine the nature and scope of the activity. Through this investigation, American Welding determined that certain computer systems were subject to unauthorized access as a result of the event between August 13, 2024 and August 15, 2024. As a result, American Welding began a comprehensive review process to identify the presence of sensitive information that may have been contained within the impacted systems and to identify the individuals to whom the information relates. While this review is ongoing, on or about October 31, 2024, it determined that documents containing protected information for certain current and former employees was stored on the impacted systems and may include name, and data related to personnel files and payroll, which may include Social Security number, financial account information, and/or government issued identification.

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Notice to Maryland Resident

On or about December 10, 2024, American Welding is providing written notice of this incident to potentially impacted individuals, including one (1) Maryland resident. Written notice is being provided in substantially the same form as the letter attached here as ***Exhibit A***. The investigation and notification to impacted individuals is ongoing, and American Welding may supplement this notification if it is determined that a significant number of additional Maryland residents will receive notice.

Other Steps Taken and To Be Taken

Upon discovering the event, American Welding moved quickly to investigate and respond to the incident, assess the security of American Welding systems, and identify potentially affected individuals. Further, American Welding notified federal law enforcement regarding the event and is working to implement additional safeguards and training to its employees. American Welding is providing complimentary access to credit monitoring services for twelve (12) months, through TransUnion, to individuals whose information was potentially affected by this incident.

Additionally, American Welding is providing impacted individuals with guidance on how to better protect against identity theft and fraud including information on how to place a fraud alert and security freeze on one's credit file, the contact details for the national consumer reporting agencies, information on how to obtain a free credit report, a reminder to remain vigilant for incidents of fraud and identity theft by reviewing account statements and monitoring free credit reports, and encouragement to contact the Federal Trade Commission, their state Attorney General, and law enforcement to report attempted or actual identity theft and fraud.

Contact Information

Should you have any questions regarding this notification or other aspects of the data security event, please contact us at (267) 930-4637.

Very truly yours,



Gregory Lederman of
MULLEN COUGHLIN LLC

GCL/ncl
Enclosure

EXHIBIT A



December 10, 2024

NOTICE OF SECURITY INCIDENT

Dear [REDACTED]:

[REDACTED], writes to inform you of a recent event that may impact some of your information. We are providing you with information about the event, our response, and the steps you may take to further protect your information, should you feel it necessary to do so.

What Happened? On August 15, 2024, we identified suspicious activity related to certain computer systems and promptly took steps to secure the network. We launched an investigation into the nature and scope of the activity and determined that certain computer systems were subject to unauthorized access between August 13, 2024 and August 15, 2024. During that time, certain files were copied from our network by an unauthorized actor.

What Information Was Involved? While our investigation into the full nature and scope of the event remains ongoing, a review of the contents of the involved systems recently determined that the following types of information relating to you may have been affected: your name, data related to your personnel file and payroll, which may include your Social Security number, financial account information, and/or government issued identification. Please note, we are not aware of any identity theft or fraud as a result of this incident and are notifying you out of an abundance of caution.

What We Are Doing. We take this incident and the security of information in our care seriously. Upon discovering the incident, we promptly took steps to assess and secure our network and to investigate the scope of the incident. We are reviewing existing security polices and have implemented additional security measures to further protect against similar incidents moving forward.

As an added precaution, we are offering you access to complimentary credit monitoring and identity theft protection services for twelve months, through TransUnion. You can find a description of these services and information on how to enroll in the below *Steps You Can Take to Help Protect Your Information*. We encourage you to enroll in these services as we are not able to do so on your behalf.

What You Can Do. We encourage you to remain vigilant against identity theft and fraud by reviewing your account statements and monitoring your free credit reports for suspicious activity and to detect errors. You can find out more about how to protect your information in the enclosed *Steps You Can Take to Help Protect Your Information*. There you will also find more information on the credit monitoring services we are offering and how to enroll.

For More Information. We understand that you may have questions about this incident that are not addressed in this letter. If you have additional questions, please call our dedicated assistance line at 1-833-833-9967, Monday through Friday, from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm Eastern Time (excluding U.S. holidays).

Sincerely,



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STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO HELP PROTECT YOUR INFORMATION

Enroll in Monitoring Services

In response to the incident, we are providing you with access to Single Bureau Credit Monitoring/Single Bureau Credit Report/Single Bureau Credit Score services at no charge. These services provide you with alerts for twelve months from the date of enrollment when changes occur to your credit file. This notification is sent to you the same day that the change or update takes place with the bureau. Finally, we are providing you with proactive fraud assistance to help with any questions that you might have or in event that you become a victim of fraud. These services will be provided by Cyberscout, a TransUnion company specializing in fraud assistance and remediation services.

How do I enroll for the free services?

To enroll in Credit Monitoring services at no charge, please log on to <https://bfs.cyberscout.com/activate> and follow the instructions provided. When prompted please provide the following unique code to receive services: [REDACTED]. In order for you to receive the monitoring services described above, you must enroll within 90 days from the date of this letter. The enrollment requires an internet connection and e-mail account and may not be available to minors under the age of 18 years of age. Please note that when signing up for monitoring services, you may be asked to verify personal information for your own protection to confirm your identity.

Monitor Your Accounts

Under U.S. law, a consumer is entitled to one free credit report annually from each of the three major credit reporting bureaus, Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion. To order a free credit report, visit www.annualcreditreport.com or call, toll-free, 1-877-322-8228. Consumers may also directly contact the three major credit reporting bureaus listed below to request a free copy of their credit report.

Consumers have the right to place an initial or extended “fraud alert” on a credit file at no cost. An initial fraud alert is a 1-year alert that is placed on a consumer’s credit file. Upon seeing a fraud alert display on a consumer’s credit file, a business is required to take steps to verify the consumer’s identity before extending new credit. If consumers are the victim of identity theft, they are entitled to an extended fraud alert, which is a fraud alert lasting seven years. Should consumers wish to place a fraud alert, please contact any of the three major credit reporting bureaus listed below.

As an alternative to a fraud alert, consumers have the right to place a “credit freeze” on a credit report, which will prohibit a credit bureau from releasing information in the credit report without the consumer’s express authorization. The credit freeze is designed to prevent credit, loans, and services from being approved in a consumer’s name without consent. However, consumers should be aware that using a credit freeze to take control over who gets access to the personal and financial information in their credit report may delay, interfere with, or prohibit the timely approval of any subsequent request or application they make regarding a new loan, credit, mortgage, or any other account involving the extension of credit. Pursuant to federal law, consumers cannot be charged to place or lift a credit freeze on their credit report. To request a credit freeze, individuals may need to provide some or all of the following information:

1. Full name (including middle initial as well as Jr., Sr., II, III, etc.);
2. Social Security number;
3. Date of birth;
4. Addresses for the prior two to five years;
5. Proof of current address, such as a current utility bill or telephone bill;
6. A legible photocopy of a government-issued identification card (state driver’s license or ID card, etc.); and
7. A copy of either the police report, investigative report, or complaint to a law enforcement agency concerning identity theft if they are a victim of identity theft.

Should consumers wish to place a credit freeze or fraud alert, please contact the three major credit reporting bureaus listed below:

Equifax	Experian	TransUnion
https://www.equifax.com/personal/credit-report-services/	https://www.experian.com/help/	https://www.transunion.com/credit-help
1-888-298-0045	1-888-397-3742	1-800-916-8800
Equifax Fraud Alert, P.O. Box 105069 Atlanta, GA 30348-5069	Experian Fraud Alert, P.O. Box 9554, Allen, TX 75013	TransUnion Fraud Alert, P.O. Box 2000, Chester, PA 19016
Equifax Credit Freeze, P.O. Box 105788 Atlanta, GA 30348-5788	Experian Credit Freeze, P.O. Box 9554, Allen, TX 75013	TransUnion Credit Freeze, P.O. Box 160, Woodlyn, PA 19094



Additional Information

Consumers may further educate themselves regarding identity theft, fraud alerts, credit freezes, and the steps they can take to protect your personal information by contacting the consumer reporting bureaus, the Federal Trade Commission, or their state Attorney General. The Federal Trade Commission may be reached at: 600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, D.C. 20580; www.identitytheft.gov; 1-877-ID-THEFT (1-877-438-4338); and TTY: 1-866-653-4261. The Federal Trade Commission also encourages those who discover that their information has been misused to file a complaint with them. Consumers can obtain further information on how to file such a complaint by way of the contact information listed above. Consumers have the right to file a police report if they ever experience identity theft or fraud. Please note that in order to file a report with law enforcement for identity theft, consumers will likely need to provide some proof that they have been a victim. Instances of known or suspected identity theft should also be reported to law enforcement and the relevant state Attorney General. This notice has not been delayed by law enforcement.

For District of Columbia residents, the District of Columbia Attorney General may be contacted at: 400 6th Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20001; (202) 442-9828; and oag.dc.gov. American Welding & Gas, Inc. is located at 4900 Falls of Neuse Road, Suite 150, Raleigh, NC 27609.

For Maryland residents, the Maryland Attorney General may be contacted at: 200 St. Paul Place, 16th Floor, Baltimore, MD 21202; 1-410-576-6300 or 1-888-743-0023; and <https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/>. American Welding & Gas, Inc. is located at 4900 Falls of Neuse Road, Suite 150, Raleigh, NC 27609.

For New Mexico residents, consumers have rights pursuant to the Fair Credit Reporting Act, such as the right to be told if information in their credit file has been used against them, the right to know what is in their credit file, the right to ask for their credit score, and the right to dispute incomplete or inaccurate information. Further, pursuant to the Fair Credit Reporting Act, the consumer reporting bureaus must correct or delete inaccurate, incomplete, or unverifiable information; consumer reporting agencies may not report outdated negative information; access to consumers' files is limited; consumers must give consent for credit reports to be provided to employers; consumers may limit "prescreened" offers of credit and insurance based on information in their credit report; and consumers may seek damages from violators. Consumers may have additional rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act not summarized here. Identity theft victims and active-duty military personnel have specific additional rights pursuant to the Fair Credit Reporting Act. We encourage consumers to review their rights pursuant to the Fair Credit Reporting Act by visiting www.consumerfinance.gov/f/201504_cfpb_summary_your-rights-under-fcra.pdf, or by writing Consumer Response Center, Room 130-A, Federal Trade Commission, 600 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20580.

For New York residents, the New York Attorney General may be contacted at: Office of the Attorney General, The Capitol, Albany, NY 12224-0341; 1-800-771-7755; or <https://ag.ny.gov>.

For North Carolina residents, the North Carolina Attorney General may be contacted at: 9001 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-9001; 1-877-566-7226 or 1-919-716-6000; and www.ncdoj.gov.

For Rhode Island residents, the Rhode Island Attorney General may be reached at: 150 South Main Street, Providence, RI 02903; www.riag.ri.gov; and 1-401-274-4400. Under Rhode Island law, individuals have the right to obtain any police report filed in regard to this event. There are approximately 7 Rhode Island residents that may be impacted by this event.

