



July 15, 2019 - Update Regarding Previous Privacy Incident

On February 15, 2019, Minnesota Eye Consultants learned that portions of medical records for approximately 4,556 individuals were not securely destroyed. Due to a housekeeping service change in early February, containers used by our Medical Record Department to temporarily store documents with patient information before secure destruction via shred bins were inadvertently emptied by the housekeeping service into recycling by a new housekeeping service. This is a courtesy update to the notice we previously posted about the incident on April 15, 2019.

Our recycling service had informed us that recyclable material was compacted on site before transfer. However, there was a possibility that patient information could be at risk before it was rendered de-identifiable during the recycling process. Therefore, potentially affected patients have been notified by mail, and complimentary Equifax credit monitoring services for 12 months has been offered as described in those letters.

In an abundance of caution, we sought to notify patients whose information was accessed by Medical Records staff between January 28, 2019-February 14, 2019. However, there remains a portion of patients for which no current contact information is available. If you were a patient of Minnesota Eye Consultants between 2004 and 2007, but have not been seen since that time, please call toll free at 1-877-253-3678 Monday-Friday 8am to 8pm CST to determine if your information may have been affected. Other patients who received services from Minnesota Eye Consultants who have questions or would like to learn additional information about this incident may also call this same toll free number. As a courtesy to our patients, this toll free number is being extended for an additional period of time.

As previously reported, the patient information at issue may include patient names, dates of birth, addresses and phone number, insurance IDs and/or social security numbers, health history and physical exams, medications, diagnoses and treatment plans. As a precaution, patients should remain vigilant for fraud and identity theft by reviewing their statements and credit reports; if unusual activity is detected on an account, patients should promptly notify the health care provider or company where the account is maintained. **At this time, Minnesota Eye Consultants is not aware of any misuse of the information.**

To receive one free copy of a credit report every twelve months from each of the three nationwide credit reporting companies, you may go to annualcreditreport.com or call 1-877-322-8228. For more information about requesting a free credit report, you may go to: <https://www.ftc.gov/faq/consumer-protection/get-my-free-credit-report>.

Minnesota Eye Consultants takes our role in safeguarding patient information very seriously, and we are troubled that this event occurred. Since the time of discovery, we have been working diligently to rectify the situation and ensure it never happens again. These initiatives include enhancing safeguards for the Medical Records Department, taking corrective action, and providing re-education to our Medical Records staff regarding proper handling and destruction of patient information.

At Minnesota Eye Consultants, our mission is to preserve, restore, and enhance vision through research, teaching, and providing the highest quality medical and surgical care to patients. With multiple laser and refractive surgery centers in the Twin Cities and a growing team of dedicated eye care professionals, we are committed to delivering these services in a convenient, community setting.