

Fall Is A Good Time For Consumers To Review Their Personal Finances

(NAPSA)—The last few months of the year are traditionally one of the busiest when it comes to consumer spending. Back-to-school and college spending peaks during the third quarter of the year followed by consumer spending during the holidays. The Federal Reserve estimates that credit card debt will reach the \$1 trillion mark this year, the highest it's been since 2008 before the housing market tumbled. For these reasons, financial analysts suggest it's a good time for consumers to review their personal finances.

Experts say one of the best ways to do this is to get your credit report. A recent survey showed that two in five consumers don't take advantage of getting their free annual credit report at annualcreditreport.com. "While 81 percent of consumers knew that they could obtain a free credit report every year, it's disappointing to see such a large number of people not taking advantage of this opportunity," said Stuart K. Pratt, president and CEO of the Consumer Data Industry Association. "It's always a good idea to stay updated on your personal finances and your credit report offers one of the best ways to do that, especially since studies show that many consumers underestimate the amount of outstanding credit card debt they have. The credit report puts it all in perspective."



A free annual report can help you manage your money.

The credit report will list your credit card and loan obligations. "Check the report and make sure everything is in order. If you see anything in error, contact the credit bureau. If you have any documentation or supporting information relative to the data in question, send that to the credit bureau as well. Most of these issues are resolved within 14 days," noted Pratt.

Staying on top of your personal finances at the end of the year helps ease the stress that can sometimes occur when bills start rolling in at the beginning of the next year. Be a savvy consumer; watch your spending and get your free annual credit report.



Note to Editors: The credit bureaus are implementing a National Consumer Assistance Plan in New York state. It will be going countrywide. While the information is relevant and can benefit people throughout the United States, it may be of particular interest to news outlets in New York State.