



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

October 1, 2020

**Contact:**

Suzanne Whitney, Marketing Manager, Union Bank  
802.888.0963 | [swhitney@unionbankvt.com](mailto:swhitney@unionbankvt.com)

**October is National Cybersecurity Awareness Month**

**Morrisville, VT** - In recognition of National Cybersecurity Month in October, Union Bank has joined the American Bankers Association (ABA) and the National Cybersecurity Alliance (NCSA) to raise awareness about the importance of practicing cybersecurity across our Nation, ensuring Americans have the resources they need to be safer and more secure online. With the persistent threat of phishing scams, the Federal Trade Commission estimates that consumers lost \$1.9 billion to phishing schemes in 2019. The COVID-19 pandemic has only increased the threat. To combat phishing, the ABA has launched the #BanksNeverAskThat campaign offering engaging content to empower consumers to identify fraudulent bank communications asking for sensitive information like their passwords and social security numbers. This year's campaign also offers a sweepstakes with prize drawings. The NCSA offers an abundance of tips, infographics and videos urging everyone to be extra vigilant against online scams, including phishing and malware, that are more prevalent in times like these.

"Educating customers about account security and cyber threats is something we all must be conscious about if we want to reduce the risk of sensitive information being exploited for criminal use," said Patricia Hogan, Senior Risk Officer at Union Bank. "We take great care in handling our customers' sensitive information and want to equip them with practical steps they can take to help strengthen our nation's cybersecurity ecosystem and avoid falling prey to identity theft and fraud."

There are steps consumers can take to reduce their chances of becoming a victim of identity theft or fraud. We encourage consumers to:

- **Enable the strongest authentication tools offered** by their bank. Popular authentication methods include biometrics, security keys and single-use codes.
- **Use complex passwords and differentiate them** across multiple platforms. For example, customers should use one password for their online bank account and another for their email account.
- **Do a system check.** Purge unused apps and outdated or sensitive information stored in old files and emails and ensure all software on internet-connected devices is current.

Consumers can also make sure their account has not been compromised by taking the following steps:

- **Check bank statements regularly** to ensure the purchases are legitimate.
- **Read the fine print when purchasing items online.** Often a website or application will ask for permission to save account information.

- **Stay vigilant.** Be mindful when shopping online and look for signs of illegitimate websites. Spelling or grammatical errors, missing contact information, and suspicious URLs or email addresses are all red flags.

Learn more about how to protect your digital life during National Cybersecurity Awareness Month by visiting the [Stay Safe Online website](#).

Union Bank, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Union Bankshares, Inc. (UNB, traded on the NASDAQ Exchange), provides commercial, retail and municipal banking services and asset management services throughout northern Vermont and New Hampshire. Union Bank operates 18 banking offices, two loan centers, and multiple ATMs throughout its geographical footprint.

Since 1891, Union Bank has helped people achieve their dreams of owning a home, saving for retirement, starting or expanding a business and assisting municipalities to improve their communities. Union Bank has earned an exceptional reputation for residential lending programs and has been recognized by the US Department of Agriculture, Rural Development for the positive impact made in lives of low to moderate home buyers. Union Bank is consistently one of the top Vermont Housing Finance Agency mortgage originators and has also been designated as an SBA Preferred lender for its participation in small business lending. Union Bank's employees contribute to the communities where they work and reside, serving on non-profit boards, raising funds for worthwhile causes, and giving countless hours in serving our fellow residents. All of these efforts have resulted in Union receiving an "Outstanding" rating for its compliance with the Community Reinvestment Act ("CRA") in its most recent examination. Union Bank is proud to be one of the few independent community banks serving Vermont and New Hampshire and we maintain a strong commitment to our core traditional values of keeping deposits safe, giving customers convenient financial choices and making loans to help people in our local communities buy homes, grow businesses, and create jobs. These values--combined with financial expertise, quality products and the latest technology--make Union Bank the premier choice for your banking services, both personal and business. Member FDIC. Equal Housing Lender.

###