



WV Executive Branch Privacy Tip



Plugging in – What's the risk?

We've most likely all been there. We show up to the airport and our phone is dead or near dead and of course we left our phone charger at home. We get excited when we spot a charging station, but should we be? Most of us probably haven't thought of the risks associated with them, so let's dive in, shall we?

Threat: Public Charging Stations

Do You Need to Worry? Yes. The USB [cord used to charge your phone](#) is also used to send data from your phone to other devices. By pairing it with any charging station (airport, plane, mall), which usually has a computer hidden behind it, you run the risk of having your photos or contact info sent to that device. Or worse, this computer (if compromised) could [inject malicious code](#) directly into your device. You should also avoid [connecting your mobile device via USB](#) to a rental car's entertainment system just for charging. Use the cigarette lighter adapter instead so you don't have to worry about your personal info being stored in a car that's not yours.

What Can You Do About It: The obvious answer is to keep your phone fully charged before you head out. The realistic answer is to consider [carrying a portable battery pack](#) with you. If you absolutely must use a charging station, [power down your phone](#) before doing so.



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