



## Safeguarding Your Identity with Overseas Shipments

Under current U.S. law, third-party companies can access and examine vessel manifests and summary statistical reports of imports and exports, including household goods (HHG) shipments. This information includes data elements such as a client's name, address, passport number, and the name and address to which the shipment is consigned. These third-party companies can copy this information for publication and disseminate to entities that have purchased their services.

Because of the potential threat of identity theft, this policy has obviously prompted complaints regarding privacy issues. The U.S. Customs and Border Control has facilitated a method where an individual can request confidential treatment for their shipment. Unfortunately, this must be done on an individual basis.

One can request confidentiality on a shipment by completing the form on the following website:

[http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/trade/automated/automated\\_systems/ams/vessel\\_manifest\\_confid\\_form.xml](http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/trade/automated/automated_systems/ams/vessel_manifest_confid_form.xml)

The data required for input into the form is largely self-explanatory but the following guidance will assist further.

- One should use their full name as listed in their passport for the first line and then add any variations of their name in the last box.
- In response to the question on the "Requestor Role" customers should use "consignee" in the drop down box if they are moving to the United States and "U.S. Shipper" if they are moving from the United States.
- One should use the term "1<sup>st</sup> party" in the next box.
- In "Type of Confidentiality" box, it is recommended to always use "Both Inward & Outward (Import & Export) to cover all circumstances
- Finally, one should check off the circle in front of "Individual Importing Personal Effects or Household Goods".
- After all lines have been completed, simply click the Submit button.

Shortly thereafter, an e-mail confirmation from the U.S. Customs and Border Protection will have a confidentiality of vessel manifest information attachment. This is valid for 2 years and extends to all ports of entry. The e-mail and attachment should be kept by the relocating employee.