

Your bank should be safe, but here's how to check

BANK Q&A

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For concerned consumers, we posed these questions to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., which insures retail bank deposits:

Q. Should the rescue of Bear Stearns Cos., an investment bank that specialized in corporate finance, have consumers worried about potential failures of retail banks and the safety of their checking, savings and other bank accounts?

A. It's unlikely your bank is going to fail. The retail banking system in general is very strong. U.S.-based banks collectively have more than \$1 trillion in capital, a historically high level and a key cushion. **Meanwhile, out of more than 8,500 banks in the country, last year there were only three failures, and so far this year there have been just two.**

Q. In the event of a failure, what type of accounts does the FDIC cover?

A. Deposit accounts only, including savings and checking accounts, certificates of deposits, individual retirement accounts and trust accounts.

Q. What about money market accounts?

A. Money market deposit accounts are covered. Money market mutual fund accounts are not.

Q. What is the maximum coverage?

A. Generally, customers are insured up to at least \$100,000 at the same insured bank. But there are ways to have more than \$100,000 fully insured at a bank.

Example instance, could have \$1.1 million fully insured at one depository institution if they structure their accounts properly.