

Save, Shred, or Recycle?

PREPARED FOR:

DATE: / /

You'll Need:

- A shredder
- A filing cabinet or file box
- File folders and file labels (accordion-type files work well for large files)
- A safe-deposit box at your local bank or in-home fireproof box

SAVE: IN YOUR SAFE-DEPOSIT BOX OR IN AN IN-HOME FIREPROOF BOX

- Certificates of birth, death, marriage, and adoption
- Social Security card
- Deeds
- Car titles
- An inventory—either written or video—of your household possessions, especially electronics, expensive appliances, collectibles, and jewelry
- Tax returns for the past seven years, as well as any receipts, statements, and other documents that relate to those returns
- Insurance policies
- Estate documents such as wills, trusts, and powers of attorney (keep additional copies with your estate planning attorney and in a safe place at home)
- Contracts
- Important medical records

SAVE: IN YOUR IN-HOME STORAGE

- Paper bank statements (if you still receive them) after you've balanced your checkbook
- Receipts related to major home improvements (but not routine home maintenance such as fertilizing the lawn)
- Receipts, credit card statements, and utility bills if related to the current tax year
- Warranties, user manuals, and receipts related to household appliances and equipment (you may want to store these unwieldy items in separate boxes)
- Investment statements
- Trade confirmations for securities that you still own
- Copies of estate documents such as wills, trusts, and powers of attorney

SHRED IT:

- Credit card offers and other solicitations with your name preprinted on them
- Canceled checks related to non-tax-deductible items
- Deposit slips that accompany your bank and investment statements
- Credit card receipts if they don't have your account number on them
- Paid utility bills, if unrelated to the current tax year
- Paid credit card bills, if unrelated to the current tax year

RECYCLE IT:

- Marketing materials that accompany your bank and investment statements
- Prospectuses and annual and semiannual reports related to your investments (after you've read them, of course!)
- Warranties and manuals for items that you no longer own