

# What Records Can You Toss?

## TOSS EVERY MONTH:

- ATM and BANK DEPOSIT SLIPS, after you've recorded the amounts in your check register and checked them against your monthly bank statement.
- CREDIT CARD RECEIPTS, after you've checked to make sure the item appears correctly on your monthly statement.
- SALES RECEIPTS FOR MINOR PURCHASES, after you've satisfactorily used the item and if it has no warranty.

## TOSS AFTER ONE YEAR:

- MONTHLY BANK AND CREDIT CARD STATEMENTS (if you don't itemize deductions.)
- MONTHLY OR QUARTERLY BROKERAGE AND MUTUAL FUND STATEMENTS, after you've reconciled them with your year-end summary.
- MONTHLY MORTGAGE STATEMENTS, as long as your year-end statement clearly shows the total amount you've paid in interest and property taxes over the course of the year.
- PHONE AND UTILITY BILLS - (as long as you don't have a home office, use your phone for business calls, or anticipate any need to prove long-term residency). PAYCHECK STUBS, after you've reconciled them with your annual W-2 or 1099 forms.

## RETAIN FOR SEVEN YEARS:

- W-2 and 1099 FORMS.
- YEAR-END STATEMENTS FROM CREDIT CARD COMPANIES.
- PHONE AND UTILITY BILLS (only if you deduct any portion for business expenses, have more than one home, or have moved within the past few years.)
- CANCELLED CHECKS AND RECEIPTS/STATEMENTS FOR: annual mortgage interest and property taxes, deductible business expenses, child-care bills, out-of-pocket medical costs, or any other tax-deductible expenses.
- CHILD SUPPORT PAYMENTS (cancelled checks), especially if divorce is messy.

## KEEP INDEFINITELY:

- YOUR ANNUAL TAX RETURNS.
- YOUR YEAR-END SUMMARIES from financial-services companies.
- CONFIRMATION SLIPS that list the purchase price of any investments that you own.
- HOME-IMPROVEMENT RECORDS.
- RECEIPTS FOR MAJOR PURCHASES (any item whose replacement cost exceeds the deductible on your homeowner's or renter's insurance policy).
- BENEFICIARY DESIGNATIONS.
- INSURANCE POLICIES, for as long as they are in force.
- WARRANTIES, for as long as they are in force.

## WITH YOUR ATTORNEY:

Wills, trust documents, power of attorney, life support directives, health care surrogates and similar legal documents should be left in the care of your attorney. You should keep a copy of key documents in your home file, and financial experts advise you give a copy to your personal representative or executor.

## IN A SAFE DEPOSIT BOX AT A BANK OR AT LEAST IN A FIREPROOF BOX:

Birth certificates, naturalization papers, marriage and divorce documents, adoption papers, and a parent's or spouse's death certificate. Also, a lot of people keep deeds to their property as well as titles to their cars in a fireproof box or safe deposit box.

Securities and bonds, although a lot are kept electronically today. Household inventories, videos of household items. You can also give a copy to a friend for added insurance.