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## Valuable Papers Checklist

FRM-00393

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### In this issue

- Description of valuable papers
- Checklist for sorting valuable papers

### Tips to help you

- Sort valuable papers
- Store valuable papers

### What you'll need

- Checklist included in this issue
- Pencil
- Valuable papers
- Fireproof files, home safe or safe deposit box
- Billfold

### What are valuable papers?

Valuable papers are documents which you may need sometime during your lifetime for various reasons. For example, a birth certificate is used to prove age when obtaining a drivers license.

Valuable papers include documents such as birth, marriage and death certificates, deeds, leases, contracts, wills, insurance policies, military papers and social security records.

### Why worry about valuable papers?

In cases of fire or theft, it would be difficult to remember or identify exactly what was lost. If you could remember, it would take a long time to replace the lost documents. Valuable time or money would be lost. Therefore, it's much better to protect valuable papers than to replace them.

### Where should they be located?

Valuable papers should be sorted into two files. Some valuable papers such as your drivers license are stored in your billfold. Other papers should be stored in a home safe or bank safe deposit box.

### Who should file them?

One person should agree to handle all the home business affairs. However, all family members need to be familiar with the files and know where items are located.

### A safe place

Each of us has valuables which should be kept in fire-proof, theft-proof storage: either a home safe or a bank safe deposit box. Because many documents are difficult if not impossible to replace and with the increasing number of home burglaries and fires, it is important to store valuables and documents in a safe place.

A home safe or fireproof file should be able to withstand heat of 1700° F for one hour. Another option is to rent a safe deposit box. The rental cost is small compared to the possible loss that could occur. Remember that when you store income producing property such as stocks or bonds in the box, the rental fee is deductible from your federal income tax.

If you choose to rent a safe deposit box, here are some tips to help you get organized.

- Make an inventory of what is in your box and put the list in a safe place at home. Be sure to keep the inventory current\*.

- Check your homeowners insurance coverage to find out if it covers the contents of your safe deposit box and if so, to what extent it insures you against loss. In addition, check the agreement you have signed with the bank for any limitations on protection.

- Keep family members informed about the location of your safe deposit box, the number of the box and the location of the keys for the box.

- It is not advisable to put your will, burial lot deed or birth certificate in a safe deposit box in the event that the box may be sealed upon your death. Instead, your will should be filed at home in a safe, with your attorney, or with the probate court. Birth certificates and burial lot deeds should be kept in a safe place since they will be needed before the funeral.

The checklist which follows will help you to get organized. Begin by dusting off those valuable papers. Mark the items on the checklist which you need to collect and file.

Some papers may need revising. Be sure to keep information current by examining valuable papers for ownership, beneficiaries and revisions.

File original documents in a fireproof, theft-proof place and copies of originals in your permanent file.

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\* Making a valuable papers inventory is explained in the fifth issue of the *Getting Organized Series*, FRM-00394.

# Valuable Papers Checklist

## File in your billfold

- Auto insurance card
- Blood type card
- Cards showing if you are diabetic, epileptic or allergic to certain drugs
- Credit cards
- Drivers license
- Employee ID card
- Health & accident insurance card
- Identification card
- Name of person to notify in case of accident
- Organization membership
- Uniform Donor Card (Eye, bone, kidney, etc.)

## File in your bank safe deposit box or home safe

- Animal records
- Automobile titles
- Contracts**
- Installment
- Mortgage
- Notes owed
- Security

- Educational records**
- Diplomas
- Transcripts
- Employment records**
- Family history
- Household inventories
- Income records

- Insurance policies**
- Disability
- Health
- Homeowners
- Liability
- Life

- Investments**
- Bonds (Corporate, Savings, Municipal)
- Certificates of deposit
- Coins
- Gold/silver
- Jewelry/gems
- Money market funds
- Notes to collect
- Stamps
- Stock certificates
- Valuable collections

- Keys
- Medical and immunization records

- Military records**
- Discharge papers
- Veteran's claim number
- Patents or copyrights

- Personal records**
- Adoption papers
- Baptismal records
- Birth certificate
- Citizenship papers
- Death certificate
- Divorce papers
- Marriage certificate
- Passports

- Photos-family
- Property records**
- Abstracts
- Bills of sale
- Burial lot deed
- Contract of sale
- Deeds
- Land contract
- Leases
- Titles

- Retirement**
- Social security

- Valuable papers inventory
- Will (a copy, not the original)

## About the series

This is a series of fact sheets to assist you in setting up a system to help you get control of your time and resources.

Each fact sheet gives you suggestions and ideas concerning one topic with a suggested activity to help you get one step closer to becoming organized.

It may take you as long as a year to get your management system working effectively for you.

Households that develop such a system and use it faithfully have discovered that no matter what the economic conditions are, they can still get ahead or at least stay even.

In this series, you can request fact sheets on the following topics:

- *Organizing Your Home Business Center* (FRM-00390)
- *The Temporary Home Filing System* (FRM-00391)

- *The Permanent Home Filing System* (FRM-00392)
- *Valuable Papers Checklist* (FRM-00393)
- *Valuable Papers Inventory* (FRM-00394)
- *Taking A Household Inventory With a Camera* (FRM-00395)
- *Keeping Home Records: What to Discard* (FRM-00396)
- *Replacing Valuable Papers* (FRM-00397)

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