



A Program with the
Colorado Attorney General
and the AARP Foundation



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Shredding: A Key Weapon in Your Identity Theft Prevention

Stories of identity theft and fraud are all too common. It can give anyone a course of worry since a good amount of personal information can be retrieved from old account statements and other personal documents, including unused or expired credit cards.

A simple step to take to help prevent personal information from being used fraudulently is to shred all documents, discs and credit cards that contain person information. Paper shredders are the first line of defense against improper use of personal and business documents. Paper shredders are affordable and lightweight and come in a variety of price ranges. The best paper shredder is the cross-cut shredder because it is more difficult to bring back together the small pieces of paper.

Deciding what to keep and what to shred can be a chore, but worth it in the long run. Some things that need to be kept for several years, if not forever, are things such as tax returns, personal memories and photographs, important medical information, and statements covering longstanding investments and real estate.

After the sorting is done, the next thing to look at is tossing vs. shredding. The following are good rules to consider for shredding:

- Anything with social security numbers and bank account numbers.
- Anything with your address or phone number.
- Names of family members.
- Institutional/Professional affiliations (for example, Foreign Service Benefit Plan, IEEE mail)
- Bank or credit card promotions.
- Subscription renewals.

By shredding all documents with your personal identification, you are taking one of the most important steps towards protecting your personal information and safeguarding your credit.

This year's AARP ElderWatch annual shredding event will be held on Saturday, June 11. Please call 1-800-222-4444 for times and a location near you.

Prevent Financial Elder Abuse!

1-800-222-4444

Denver Metro Area
303-222-4444

www.aarpelderwatch.org

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