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Simply Back to Basics
["Providing Customized Solutions for Life Situations"](#)

[Get it Together! Keep it Together! Let Linda Help!](#)

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Linda's Organizing Tip for November 2008:

Permanent Record Storage; Not Urgent, but Important!

One of the things I usually find when I help people organize their home records is that many do not have a permanent home for their most important documents. Birth/marriage/death certificates, life insurance policies and passports are often mixed in with bills, car repair records and appliance manuals. Renting a safety deposit box is certainly one option for keeping these documents safe and provides secure storage in the event of a fire or theft; however; there is the added yearly cost and the need to go somewhere else to access any needed documents.

Another convenient option is to purchase a [fireproof storage file box](#), like this one available from Target. The price here is listed about \$100; however; I have purchased it at my local Target for around \$45. It accommodates hanging files in a built in frame, which is very handy for finding what you need. It can be locked, if desired, and stored in the basement or a closet. It will protect documents for a specified amount of time from fire, and flood-proof boxes are available, as well. Be sure to check the label of the box before you purchase to make sure you get the one that will best meet your needs. Once you have purchased the file box, you can organize your records. Internal file folders are not necessary if you are using hanging files and will add bulk to your files. Just use one hanging file per topic. Print labels using your label maker to make it look sharp and professional. Here are some suggested organizational groupings.

- Adoption Papers
- Certificates (here you can group Birth Records, Marriage Certificates, Death Certificates, Business Certificates or DBA, Tax numbers, social security cards, professional certificates, jewelry appraisals, diplomas, loan payoff statements, automobile titles)
- House Deed/purchase information
- Important Stuff (passwords, copies of wallet contents, personal letters/Momentos)
- Letters to Children (written when they are small to be opened at some future date)
- Life Insurance Policies
- Passports
- Evaluations & Reports (psychological/education testing records)
- Resumes
- Trusts
- Wills/Health Care Proxy/Living Will/ Power of Attorney (for yourself and any other family members you may need to assist)

This list is merely a guideline and will be different depending on each person's circumstances, but it gives you a starting point. I will never forget how about 10 years ago, I found that I was missing my husband's car title, two years after its purchase, because I was purging my files and setting up my permanent record files and realized it was not there. It turned out that the dealership never sent it to us, but I would not have known that had I not been purging the unneeded info and sorting things out.

Wishing you all a very Happy and Healthy Thanksgiving Holiday!

If you need help with organizing, simply call Linda.

These tips are for sharing!
Please forward to others interested in organizing ideas.

I welcome all feedback about these articles. Please feel free to e-mail me anytime.
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