

August 2022

Documents and Important Papers

Isn't This Extra?

I guess this depends on how you see things. Everyone sees the future a little bit differently, and not everyone sees a need to prepare more than the basic four things the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints asks all of its members to prepare. The basic four things include the following:

1. Water
2. Three-month supply of things your family eats regularly
3. A year's supply of long-term storage items to sustain life
4. Financial reserves

These things are needed for basic survival anywhere. Here in Utah, there are four other things that are important enough that our area presidency has brought our attention to them and added them to our vital preparedness list. As I have looked over the whole list of eight things I can see the wisdom in each one, and I think you will too. I am personally grateful for the additional direction.

If you don't have the first four things, please keep working on getting them, but as a stake we are now moving on to the next four. We are addressing the first one in August and putting it as #5 on the our list. It is having your important papers organized in a format that you can access readily and that you can grab and go if needed.

Sometimes It Just Has To Be on Paper

Are papers strange for a day of digital filing? Maybe, but in several instances you just have to have a file of the most vital papers. However, keep reading and you may see the wisdom.

This week our daughter needed a copy of her birth certificate to get a passport. She was frantic when she realized she had lost the birth certificate and it was in a sealed file at the county courthouse that could not be opened without special court permission. Thankfully we had an extra copy, but she took one look and realized that her birth certificate was not proof of citizenship. (She was born in another country and adopted.) She really needed her birth certificate, her citizenship certificate, and her driver license. They didn't want it on a digital device, and a legal copy can't be printed from a computer. This had to be the actual documents. We were able to help her with certified copies of these papers that we had in our files. Thank goodness! Sometimes legal documents are much harder to replace than you would think, and gathering them up when you need them can be very difficult if you don't have them in a special file.

When it comes to important papers, there are some things you need to have always "at the ready." Some things are not even wise to carry around in a digital file. So, as "old-school" as it might be, it is vitally important to have a file that is portable containing your important documents. While that file may start out small, it usually grows throughout life. Technology changes. Hard drives crash. In many crises there is no electricity. So this month is a good time to "bite the bullet" and make sure that your most vital files are in order. Here is a link to our paper with a standard list, but you should think through what else your family may need.

<https://providentpapers.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Documents-and-Important-Papers-1-2019-06-09.pdf> (Preparedness Guide on Provident Papers.com) It includes the following: vital records, insurance policies, property records, medical records, financial records, and others with an explanation of each.

Having a Backup

Many legal documents have to be certified legal copies. However, it is widely accepted to have them scanned and backed up on a computer or USB drive. While you can't print out a legal copy and have it recognized the same way, you still have a record of the document. Then, sending it to someone in another location to keep safely is a good idea. That just gives you an extra layer of insurance.

What Would You Need This For?

In a crisis it would be important to prove your identity. You should have a driver license and/or a passport. You need ID to get help at a medical facility, and to get help from government agencies such as FEMA and Social Security, or even Red Cross. You often need ID to be able to access your bank accounts. *It is not a bad idea to have some ID for children. Many people even recommend that you keep fingerprints in your file. This year my nephew and his wife were in a fatal auto accident in Hawaii. It was difficult to locate dental records required by the police department where they were. That would be another good thing to have on file.

Did you know that often in a disaster FEMA will require you to have ID and proof of ownership to stay in your own home? How are you going to do that? If electricity and phone lines are out?

You should have bank account information and titles to home, cars, and anything else you want the right to retain as yours.

In case you die, will your family know how to access your will, trust, or last wishes? This should all be in your grab-and-go files.

Where to Start

If you are just starting this perhaps your goal for the month could be deciding how you will keep this file and get that basic system set up. It can be a binder with page protectors, or a water proof file box with file folders. Do what you feel best with. Just get it and start!

If this is all you can do then set goals of how many papers you will add each week and stick to it.

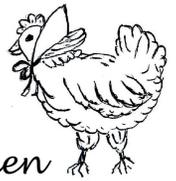
If you have your file set up, take time to review and make sure it is current.

This Might Just Be Your Favorite Thing

When people think of emergency preparedness, most of them think of food storage, and food storage is hard for a lot of people. You might find that getting your important paper file in order is a lot more fun and less of a bother to you. It may just be the thing you are really good at, and I guarantee that if these things are all in order there will come a time your family will be grateful.

Good luck as you move ahead!

Notes from Red Hen



Dear Red,

Today as I was sitting under the kitchen window of the farm house I overheard the farmer and his wife talking about their will. I have never thought about what would happen to all of my possessions, my chicks, and me if I should die. Do you have a will? How does a chicken go about such a thing? I know that is a topic no one wants to stop and think about, but I suppose it is wise to provide for the future. You are always talking about provident living, and after all that is just what it is.

— Love, Speckle

P.S. - Can chickens get insurance?