



Organize Your Papers Now...

by Karen Bucy, Estancia

you'll thank yourself later.

THE HOLIDAYS ARE behind us and we're all looking forward to high season in Southwest Florida. It's a new year filled with opportunities to enjoy friends and families and our surroundings. January is a new beginning in many respects - new resolutions, new calendars, new projects and a new tax year. It's also the perfect time to examine your household papers and files. Did I mention taxes? Save yourself time and frustration by getting yourself organized now, and you'll be ahead of the game when it's time to file. Here are few tips to get started:

- Establish one place (a folder, an envelope, a drawer) to collect all those year-end statements, 1099s, and other papers that you will need to do your 2009 income taxes. As your

mail comes in, put these items in your designated space immediately. When it's time to do your taxes or to bring them to your accountant, you'll have everything in one place ready to go.

- Assemble your 2009 bank statements, credit card statements, receipts and other papers into groups and clip or staple them together. Notate or highlight the year "2009" so you can easily identify it. You can store these items with the appropriate tax year.
- Spend an hour once a week going through your files and paper piles to sort and purge papers, catalogs and receipts. Get a jump start, and toss that junk mail as soon as it comes into your home. Don't let it touch a horizontal surface!

- Use a paper shredder to destroy papers that contain account numbers, social security numbers or other sensitive information that you do not want in the hands of others. Don't have a paper shredder? Buy one this month. You'll find shredders and many other organizing containers and tools on sale this month.

Take some time now to get organized and you'll thank yourself later. Not only will you feel a great sense of accomplishment, but you'll be less stressed and better able to enjoy our Florida paradise in the months ahead.

Karen Bucy, owner of The Paper Tamer, LLC, is a professional organizer specializing in home paper management. 239.287.6511 www.ThePaperTamer.net

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