RECORD RETENTION GUIDELINES

The following chart provides a general guideline for the retention of many records. The specific holding periods for any record retention policy should be given careful scrutiny by management and legal advisors in light of any pending investigations, regulated industry requirements or contract covenants. In addition to these general guidelines, each business should consider any industry standards that may affect the holding period of records due to unusual legal circumstances.

**Accounting Records**

Auditors’ report and annual financial statements ............ Permanently

Bank statements and deposit slips ............................ 7 years

Cancelled checks: (for the following)

  - Fixed assets .................................................. Permanently
  - General .......................................................... 7 years
  - Payroll .......................................................... 7 years
  - Taxes (payroll related) ................................. 7 years
  - Taxes (income) ............................................ Permanently

Cash disbursements journal .................. Permanently  Cash receipts journal ..................... Permanently

Chart of accounts ......................................... Permanently  Deeds, mortgages, bills of sale .......... Permanently

Electronic payment records ............. 7 years  Employee expense reports ................. 7 years

Fixed asset records (invoices, depreciation schedules) ....... Permanently

Freight bills and bills of lading .......... 7 years

General journal ................................. Permanently  General ledger ............................... Permanently

Inventory listings and tags ............ 7 years  Invoices: Sales to customers/credit memos ...... 7 years

Patent/Trademark and related papers  Permanently  Payroll journal ............................... Permanently
Production and sales reports ............................ 7 years 

Purchases ....................................................... 7 years

Purchase journal ............................................ Permanently

Purchase orders ............................................. 7 years

Sales or work orders ................................. 7 years

Subsidiary ledgers (accounts receivable, accounts payable, equipment) .............................................. 7 years

Time cards and daily time reports ................. 7 years

Training manuals ............................................ Permanently

Trial balance – year-end ................................. Permanently

**Insurance Records**

Accident reports and settled claims .............. 6 years after settlement

Fire inspection and safety reports ................. 7 years

Insurance policies (after expiration) .............. 7 years

**Legal Documents**

Articles of incorporation and bylaws ............. Permanently

Amendments to above ..................................... Permanently

Buy-sell agreements ..................................... Permanently

Contracts and leases (after expiration) .......... 7 years

Employment agreements ............................... 7 years

Legal correspondence .................................... Permanently

Minutes ......................................................... Permanently

Partnership agreements ............................... Permanently

Stock certificates and ledgers ........................ Permanently

**Tax Records**

IRS or FTB adjustments ............................. Permanently

Payroll tax returns ...................................... Permanently

Property basis records ................................. Permanently

Sales and use tax returns ............................ Permanently

Tax returns & cancelled checks for tax payments. Permanently