

Spring is the season of green grass, flowers, longer days ... and taxes.

For many residents, after tax forms are completed and filed comes a renewed focus on cleaning out paper clutter – specifically, confidential documents. It is important that these types of documents be properly destroyed to avoid putting personal information at risk of identity theft.

Additionally, paper can take up a lot of space in an office, on a desk or inside a filing cabinet. Stacks of paper can present a fire hazard and shredding and disposing of excess paper safely and securely can help minimize this risk.

DOCUMENTS THAT CONTAIN CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION SHOULD NEVER BE PLACED IN RESIDENTIAL TRASH OR RECYCLING. There are several ways to safely clear your home or office of paper clutter while minimizing your risk of identity theft:

1. Buy a home shredder. Many residents who have done this ask, “What should I do with the paper after it has been shredded?” **Empty the basket of the shredding device into a BROWN PAPER BAG AND STAPLE IT SHUT. Place the bag into your residential recycling bin or tote. Never place loose shredding in your recycling bin!** It could blow throughout your neighborhood and become litter. You can always drop off bags of shredded paper to the Monroe County / WM ecopark and place in the blue totes near the hazardous waste area.. Shredded paper can also be composted in backyard compost piles.

2. **RESIDENTS ONLY CAN BRING DOCUMENTS** to the Monroe County / WM ecopark. The ecopark accepts presorted documents from residents only and holds them in bins for periodic off site shredding.

Please note:

- This service is **NOT** "certified" or "secure" document destruction.
- Materials should be sorted *before* coming to facility: No envelopes, magazines, newspaper clippings, manila folders, etc.
- Materials from businesses, home offices, etc. will be rejected.

Because of a high demand for this service and limited bin space, the ecopark asks that residents **limit use of shredding to two bank-size boxes or similar size bags per week.**

NO APPOINTMENT IS REQUIRED to drop off documents at the ecopark for shredding.

3. Periodically, municipalities throughout the county will offer shredding events for residents. Check with your Town or Village office.

4. There are many retail and not-for-profit organizations that offer shredding services for a fee. Search the internet for locations near you.

By shredding and recycling confidential papers and documents, you are helping to reduce the amount of trees that need to be harvested for paper. Shredded paper is recycled into tissues, toilet paper and – more paper! It’s a win for you, your home or office – and the environment!