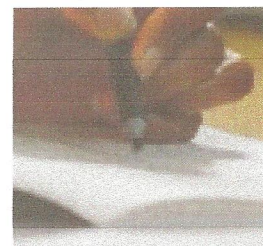


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This Independence Day, I would like to salute the courageous men and women who made this country great and celebrate the power, pride, courage and faith that we all share. I salute the spirit of America. Happy 4th of July!

I would like to thank everyone who submitted answers to our question last month. The winner of the drawing for the June newsletter question is (not yet drawn). Congratulations, xxx!

This months drawing will be for a \$25 gift certificate to The Cook & Baker in Dover.

Located at the McConnell center in Dover, NH, The Cook & Baker offers high quality take-out food that makes it easy to feed the family at dinner and/or lunch time. Options include hot meals to eat immediately, as well as prepared freezer and refrigerated foods to heat at home.

And the question is...

How much is the 2014 estate tax exemption?

[Click here](#) to submit your answer by email. Good luck!



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Interesting Facts!

July Fourth is the "biggest hot dog holiday of the year," according to TIME magazine, with Americans reportedly consuming about 155 million of them on Independence Day alone.

Despite being considered as "All American" as baseball and apple pie, the origin of the word "hot dog", as well as the invention of the hot dog bun, stirs much debate. Conflicting stories abound and everyone wants to claim ownership for the invention of America's favorite food.

While the hot dog's precise history may never be known, that doesn't stop us from consuming over 20 billion hot dogs every year!

Local Events!

Local Independence Day Celebrations!: Various dates and times. For more information, please click [HERE](#).

July Garden Party: July 9th from 5-8 pm at Fuller Gardens in North Hampton. For information on this and other events at Fuller Gardens, please click [HERE](#).

Headliner Concert Series: Friday nights starting July 11th at Henry Law Park in Dover. For information on this and other Cocheco Arts Festival events, please click [HERE](#).

14th Annual Seek The Peak: July 18-19th hike to benefit the Mount Washington Observatory. For more information on this event, please click [HERE](#).

49th Annual Yarmouth Clamfest: July 18-20th. For more information, please click [HERE](#).

These websites are provided to you for informational purposes. We are not responsible for the website content

Personal Insurance: Society's Safety Net



What if you were to get in an accident, damage your car, and become disabled? What if your house was to burn down or your business was burglarized? What if something were to happen to you and your loved ones had to support themselves? Insurance helps to provide a safety net for each of these potentially disastrous situations.

Protect Yourself

Insurance has become a necessary and valuable part of our lives. Personal insurance, including **automobile**, **umbrella liability**, and **property insurance**, fulfills vital social needs and, in many ways, promotes public safety. By helping people restore their property and belongings to their original condition, insurance serves a valuable function.

Obviously, insurance cannot eliminate or prevent liability lawsuits, much less predict them, but it can protect the owners of homes, automobiles, businesses, and other property from the financially devastating effects of a lawsuit. Insurance cannot finance

the purchase of a home, automobile, or business, but it can make facing the risks involved in owning a home, operating a vehicle, or running a company manageable. While insurance cannot prevent property from being damaged or destroyed, it can help provide the money to replace property or find a suitable place to live.

Health and long-term care insurance alone cannot save lives, but it can help pay for timely medical attention and long-term treatment that may eventually save lives. **Life insurance** can help families maintain their financial independence by providing much needed funds when a loved one dies. **Disability income insurance** can help replace the income of a disabled breadwinner and preserve a family's quality of life. In short, insurance can-and does-help protect individuals, families, and businesses from potential financial difficulty as a result of unexpected events.

Lighten Your Burden

People may buy insurance because the law or lenders require it, or because they want to know that they will be indemnified for unpredictable losses. The decision may be based on the amount of risk they are willing to tolerate and the amount of protection they desire. Simply stated, the proper insurance coverage can help to lighten your burden when facing difficult circumstances.

To learn more about personal insurance coverage for your specific situation, speak to a qualified professional-because it never hurts to have a safety net.

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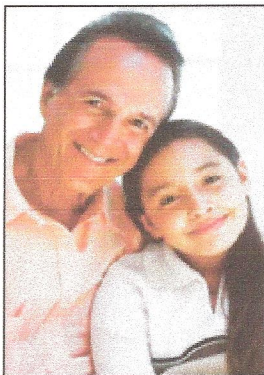
Is Estate Planning Still Necessary?



Over the past several years, Congress has proposed scenarios in which the estate tax is reduced or repealed; however, Washington lawmakers are unable to come to an agreement on the issue. In spite of this uncertainty, it is important for individuals to understand how the potential changes may affect their estate planning, so that they are ready to respond once Congress passes new legislation.

The estate tax is generally paid by the wealthiest Americans. The tax can, however, also hit families with smaller fortunes, especially if they fail to plan for a possible estate tax liability. If the combined value of all of your assets—including real estate, investments, insurance policies, savings, pensions, and even personal belongings—exceeds the estate tax exemption amount, your family members may have to pay both federal and state taxes on the inheritance. Under current law, the estate tax exemption in 2014 is \$5.34 million and the top estate tax rate is 40%.

While it may be impossible to predict whether, or to what extent, your estate will be subject taxation at your death, creating and maintaining an estate plan provides essential legal and financial protection for your heirs. If you fail to leave behind a well-structured plan for the distribution of your assets, disagreements between family members may arise, and your estate could end up in probate court.



You can reduce the size of your estate by giving away some of your assets to family members during your lifetime. Gifting is especially beneficial from a tax perspective when income is shifted to a recipient in a lower tax bracket. The annual gift tax exclusion in 2014 allows a donor to give away up to \$14,000 (subject to inflation indexing) per calendar year, per recipient, without incurring a gift tax liability. If you are married and your spouse consents to "splitting" the gift, the annual gift tax exclusion increases to \$28,000, even if only one spouse actually makes the entire gift. No gift tax is paid out of pocket until taxable gifts exceed the lifetime gift exemption, currently set at \$5.34 million.

Trusts are also valuable tools for minimizing taxes and protecting your assets from the potentially expensive probate process. A bypass trust is particularly useful for married couples, who can choose to make children or grandchildren, rather than each other, the beneficiaries of the estate. In what is commonly referred to as an A/B arrangement, the bypass trust is combined with a marital trust. Used together, these trusts can help minimize estate taxes on transfers to the next generation, while still allowing the surviving spouse to withdraw funds from the trust for reasonable living expenses. To preserve family harmony and avoid future conflicts over inheritances, you may choose

to supplement A/B trusts with a qualified terminable interest property (QTIP) trust, which gives you greater control over the distribution of your assets after your death.

The irrevocable life insurance trust (ILIT) is also frequently recommended as means of shielding assets from federal taxes. When properly implemented, the proceeds of an ILIT will not be included in your estate and will, therefore, be paid out to the trust's beneficiaries without incurring any estate tax consequences. The trust may be used to finance your children's education or to provide a staggered income for your heirs.

Clearly, these trusts do more than simply protect your family's assets from taxation. By planning your estate, you can resolve potential inheritance disputes in advance of your death. Regular consultations with your tax and legal professionals can help ensure your estate planning decisions remain consistent with your financial and personal objectives, even as tax laws change.

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Preparing for the Worst: Disaster Planning



Given the daily pressures that come with running a business, planning for an event that hasn't yet happened may not seem to be a priority. But by preparing for a major disaster, your company will also be in a better position to cope with more common disruptions, such as power outages or computer breakdowns. While every organization's needs will be different, here are some general steps you can take to prepare for the unexpected:

Draw up a step-by-step disaster response and recovery plan for your business.

Consider which essential functions of your organization would be most vulnerable in a crisis, and investigate what steps can be taken to minimize exposure to these threats. Appoint key people to take charge in an emergency, and make sure these employees have the information and authority they need to handle the crisis. Draw up a set of

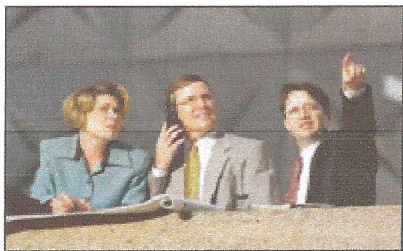
office or facilities evacuation procedures, and establish a designated meeting place outside the building. Ideally, senior management should be involved in drawing up the plan and approving all measures.

Back up data on a daily basis using a tape backup or other replication system.

Critical data should be copied onto tape or discs and stored offsite. Avoid keeping these backup tapes in the office, as they could be rendered useless if the building burns or is flooded. In addition to legal documents, all administrative data vital to the functioning of the business should be stored in this system, including billing and cash flow records, customer and employee contact details, insurance information, and appointment calendars. Test your backup system periodically to ensure its effectiveness.

Invest in power protection systems. Uninterruptible power supply (UPS) systems provide emergency battery power to shut down a network in an orderly fashion when the electricity fails, preventing damage to computers and the loss of valuable data. Surge protectors and line conditioners protect computer equipment against spikes in electrical current.

Plan to set up your operations in an alternate location. Having your data safely stored and retrievable will be of little immediate use to your business if equipment is destroyed or the office becomes uninhabitable. Consider locations where you could set up shop in the event of a major breakdown, such as a branch office or the office of another business in your community.



Burn copies of licensed software and store them offsite. To protect your access to purchased software, create CD or DVD copies of software programs and store them, along with the licensing information, outside the office. This will allow you to install the software quickly and easily on another computer.

Invest in up-to-date security software. Shield your computer network with firewalls designed to create a protective barrier between your organization's network and the Internet. Available as either software or hardware, firewalls can stop potential hackers from gaining access to confidential information stored in your system. Antivirus and anti-spyware software packages should also be installed on all computers. These

programs should include automatic updates and should never be disabled. As an extra precaution, remind staff not to open e-mail from unfamiliar addresses.

Keep insurance policies current and make records of insured items. Even a smaller business needs a package of insurance policies, which may include property insurance, contents insurance, key person insurance, disability coverage, and business interruption insurance. To avoid unnecessary conflicts with insurance companies when making claims, store detailed information about furniture and equipment, including purchase prices and serial numbers.

Once preventive measures have been taken and a plan has been drawn up, publicize evacuation and other emergency procedures within the company. Depending on the length of the plan, you may want to distribute information about the procedures in a memo or as a manual. You may also want to post a summary of the plan in a common area and arrange group sessions to explain the details of the plan and answer questions.

Resuming normal operations as soon as possible following a disaster is the goal of all continuity planning measures. By taking the appropriate steps now, you can protect your business from significant property losses and ensure that your company will be able quickly resume service to customers, even in the wake of a major disruption to operations.

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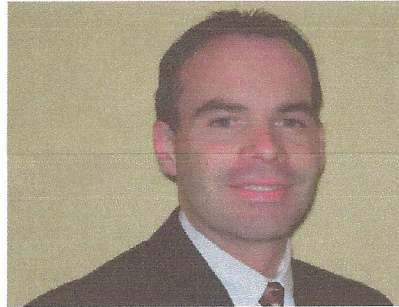
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