

# Shred . . . Store . . . Less is more!

## A “How-to” Guide for Running a Records Clean Up Day

In the Spring of 2006, the Graduate School of Education hosted a Spring Cleaning Day for staff to review, store, and shred papers no longer required to be kept locally (or at all). The response was fantastic! Staff freed up space in file cabinets (sometimes complete file cabinets), used the time to re-organize, and properly disposed of unneeded confidential, private data!

Any department, School, Center, building or other unit at Penn can have the same positive experience by following these simple steps:

- **Assemble a small team of people to help make Clean Up Day happen for your unit.** *This team must be educated about what is appropriate for destruction and what is not. We must not destroy information that is an original and still within the records retention requirements. Nor should we destroy any information if there is an actual or likely claim, lawsuit, government investigation, subpoena, summons or other ongoing matter involving such records. When in doubt, retain the information and keep it secure.*
- **Select a day that is not “the busy season.”**
- **Involve Managers.** Managers must also be aware of the rules for when data should be destroyed, archived, or retained locally and ensure that staff is educated on these rules as well. See
  - FAQs at <http://www.upenn.edu/almanac/volumes/v51/n19/shred.html>
  - Records retention schedules at <http://www.archives.upenn.edu/urc/recrdret/entry.html>
- **Send a message and periodic reminders to staff** in advance announcing “Clean Up Day: Shred . . . Store . . . Less is More!”
- **Contact the Penn Records Center** about the event and the date. The Records Center will arrange to:
  - Have extra boxes for archiving, and shredding bins for shredding, brought to the area in advance and
  - Pick up boxes for archiving, and shredding bins for destruction, at the end of your Clean Up Day.
  - Be available to answer questions about when to shred, archive, or save locally.
- **Distribute extra trash containers** for regular (non-sensitive) trash.
- **Ask for additional time from cleaning staff** and perhaps a service mechanic to help get staff offices clean and well-functioning, and promote participation.
- **Provide a meal or snack if possible** –get energy behind the event.
- **Ask members of the team to serve as “hall monitors”** to take questions, and help direct people to bins and boxes, and answer other questions.
- **Point staff to resources** about records retention schedules and FAQs regarding document destruction.

**Questions? Contact the University Records Center at 898-9432.**