

Ten Ways to Protect Your Home, Valuables and Vital Records

1. Have a fire extinguisher in your kitchen, garage and on each level of your home.
2. Keep important documents, computer CDs, photos, jewelry and other valuables in a fire- and waterproof safe.
3. If you do not have a safe, secure important records in a vacuum-sealed freezer bag and store in a frost-free freezer.
4. Walk through your home and create a video or photographic record of every room and its major contents. If using a camcorder, record voice-over descriptions of important items. If taking digital photos, write descriptions of items on the back of prints.
5. Inventory all your valuables and important documents.
6. Store originals or copies of the inventory, important documents, video or photographic records in a bank lockbox.
7. Change the batteries in smoke detectors at least twice a year. Test battery-operated or household-current smoke detectors monthly.
8. Frequently back-up critical data on your computer and store on CDs, flash drives or a tape drive.
9. Back up digital copies of important documents and photographs on a remote server.
10. Make sure your homeowner's insurance policy provides adequate coverage and take out additional coverage on high-end items such as jewelry and home office equipment