

# Taming The White Elephant: Practical Records Retention

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Good Cozy!



# Bad Cozy!



# What is Covered?

- The Problems



# What is Covered?

- The Problems
- Records Management



# What is Covered?

- The Problems
- Records Management
- Document Management



# What is Covered?

- The Problems
- Records Management
- Document Management
- Electronic Documents



# The Problems

- Each day we deal with a lot of information - and it's constantly growing.





# The Problems

- We have a lot of recorded information—in paper or other media.

George Washington - A wagonload and a half



# The Problems

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George Washington - A wagonload and a half

Herbert Hoover—1,000,000 pages



# The Problems

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Franklin D. Roosevelt—2,500,000 pages



# The Problems

- We have a lot of recorded information—in paper or other media.

George Washington—A wagonload and a half

Herbert Hoover—400,000 pages

Franklin D. Roosevelt—2,500,000 pages

Jimmy Carter—26,000,000 pages



# The Problems

- We have a lot of recorded information—in paper or other media.

Bill Clinton—42,000,000 pages



# The Problems

- We have a lot of information in other than 8 ½ x 11 format

Photographs



# The Problems

- We have a lot of information in other than 8 ½ x 11 format

Photographs

Engineering Drawings



# The Problems

- We have a lot of information in other than 8 ½ x 11 format

Photographs

Engineering Drawings

Maps and Plats





# The Problems

- We have a lot of information in other than 8 ½ x 11 format

Photographs

Engineering Drawings

Maps and Plats

Non-standard sizes (larger or smaller)



# The Problems

- We have a lot of information in other than 8 ½ x 11 format

Electronically recorded information



# The Problems

- We have a lot of information in other than 8 ½ x 11 format

Electronically recorded information

Video Files



# The Problems

- We have a lot of information in other than 8 ½ x 11 format

Electronically recorded information

Video Tape

Audio Files



# The Problems

- We have a lot of information in other than 8 ½ x 11 format

Electronically recorded information  
e-mail



# The Problems

- We have a lot of information in other than 8 ½ x 11 format

Electronically recorded information

e-mail

voice mail



# The Problems

- We have a lot of information in other than 8 ½ x 11 format

Electronically recorded information

e-mail

voice mail

instant messaging



# The Problems

- We have a lot of information in other than 8 ½ x 11 format

Electronically recorded information

Web sites





# The Problems

- We have a lot of information in other than 8 ½ x 11 format

Electronically recorded information

Web sites

Electronically submitted forms/apps



# The Problems

- We have a lot of information in other than 8 ½ x 11 format

Electronically recorded information

Web sites

Electronically submitted forms/apps

CDs, DVDs



# The Problems

- We have a lot of information in other than 8 ½ x 11 format

Electronically recorded information

Web sites

Electronically submitted forms/apps

CDs, DVDs

Scanned Documents



# The Problems

- We have a lot of information in other than 8 ½ x 11 format

Oh, and some of that electronic material is in older formats—

Word Perfect 2.0

Floppy Disks and magnetic tape?



# The Problems

- We have a lot of information that isn't "Record Information."



# The Problems

- We have a lot of information that isn't "Record Information."
- We have to comply with the SC Public Records Act.



# Records Management

- Common Sense Definition:

Keep what you need to keep for only as long as you need to keep it, and get rid of what you can get rid of as soon as you can get rid of it.



# Records Management

- Applies to recorded information in all forms and on all media.





# Records Management

- Applies to recorded information in all forms and on all media.
- Generally refers to the information, not the media.



# Records Management

- Applies to recorded information in all forms and on all media.
- Generally refers to the information, not the media.
- Is interested in types of records, not individual pieces of paper.



# Records Management

- South Carolina Law: A Record is. . .  
“all books, papers, maps, photographs, cards, tapes, recordings, or other documentary materials regardless of physical form or characteristics prepared, owned, used, in the possession of, or retained by a public body.

”

--SCCOL Title 30-4-20(c)

# Records Management

- South Carolina Law: A Record is. . .  
Regardless of physical format, (if) made or received in performance of public function.  
  
Paid for with public funds in any way, shape, or form.



# Records Management

- South Carolina Law: This applies to—
  1. State agencies, departments, boards, bureaus, commissions, and public corporations



# Records Management

- South Carolina Law: This applies to—
  1. State agencies, departments, boards, bureaus, commissions, and public corporations
  2. County and Municipal agencies and departments



# Records Management

- South Carolina Law: This applies to—
  1. State agencies, departments, boards, bureaus, commissions, and public corporations
  2. County and Municipal agencies and departments
  3. School Districts



# Records Management

- South Carolina Open Records Act: What is Open?  
“All public records of an agency except those which by order of a court of this state or by law are prohibited or specifically exempted from being open . . . shall be open.”





# Document Management

- Deals with individual documents, not series.



# Document Management

- Deals with individual documents, not series.
- Refers to paper or electronic documents.



# Document Management

- Deals with individual documents, not series.
- Refers to paper or electronic documents.
- Was the original form of information management (dating back to William the Conqueror).



# Document Management

- Became impractical in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century.



# Document Management

- Became impractical in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century.
- Became practical with the advent of the computer.



# Document Management

But—

It's based on Records Management



# Records Management

The Basic Steps of Records Management:

1. The Records Inventory.



# Records Management

The Basic Steps of Records Management:

1. The Records Inventory.
2. Identify Record Series.





# Records Management

The Basic Steps of Records Management:

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# Records Management

The Basic Steps of Records Management:

1. The Records Inventory.
2. Identify Record Series..
3. Determine the length of time each series needs to be kept.



# Records Management

The Basic Steps of Records Management:

1. The Records Inventory.
2. Identify Record Series.
3. Determine the length of time each series needs to be kept.
4. Determine the “Record” Copy.



# Records Management

The Basic Steps of Records Management:

6. Write a Records Retention Schedule for all information in the organization.



# Records Management

The Basic Steps of Records Management:

6. Write a Records Retention Schedule for all information in the organization.
7. Get the Records Retention Schedule approved by some authority.



# Records Management

The Basic Steps of Records Management:

6. Write a Records Retention Schedule for all information in the organization.
7. Get the Records Retention Schedule approved by some authority.
8. Apply the Records Retention Schedule.



# Records Management

## 1. The Records Inventory:

Find all the information in your organization, regardless of type.



# Records Management

## 2. Identify Record Series:

“A group of logically related records that support a specific business or administrative operation performed by a given program unit.”





# Records Management

## 2. Identify Record Series:

### Examples:

- SCDHEC
- Construction Contracts.
- Personnel Files.
- Traffic Tickets
- Work Orders



# Records Management

## 2. Identify Record Series:

Once we have identified a Record Series, all items within that series will be treated the same way—kept for the same length of time and terminated (destroyed or sent to archives) the same.



# Example:

--SCDHEC

--Water Dept

--Microbiological/ Turbidity  
Sampling-2017

--Microbiological/ Turbidity  
Sampling-2016

--(ETC. – 5 Years!)



# Example:

- SCDHEC

  - Water Dept

    - TTHM/HAA5 Sampling-2017

    - TTHM/HAA5 Sampling-2016

    - (10 Years!)

**\*\*Includes ALL Chemical Analyses**



# Example:

--SCDHEC

--Water Dept.

--Lead and Copper Rule – 2017

--Lead and Copper Rule – 2014

--(ETC. for 12 Years!)



# Example:

- SCDHEC

- Water Dept.

- Variances and Exemptions – 5 Years

- Sanitary Surveys – 10 Years



# Records Management

So, Our DHEC File May contain the following:

SCDHEC

-Water Dept.

--Microbiological Sampling

--2017

--TTHM/HAA5

--2017



# Records Management

So, Our DHEC File May contain the following:

SCDHEC

-Water Dept.

--Lead and Copper Rule

--2017

--Variances and Exemptions

--2017





# Records Management

So, Our DHEC File May contain the following:

SCDHEC

-Water Dept.

--Sanitary Survey

--2017



# Questions So Far?



# Records Management

4. Determine the length of time each series needs to be kept.

This is an art, not a science.



# Records Management

4. Determine the length of time each series needs to be kept.
  - SCDHEC makes this fairly simple.
  - Other types of records may not be so obvious. Reference the appropriate ordinance or standard for guidance.



# Records Management

4. Determine the length of time each series needs to be kept.
- Create a visual cue to assist with archives



# Records Management

4. Determine the length of time each series needs to be kept.
  - Give each year a color tab and extend it out to 12 Years (as an example).
  - Audit and archive your files yearly by color.



# Records Management

5. Determine the “Record” Copy.

In any media, there are multiple copies of the same information in most offices.



# Records Management

## 5. Determine the “Record” Copy.

In any media, there are multiple copies of the same information in most offices.

We don't need all copies for the length of time required—just one.





# Records Management

5. Determine the “Record” Copy.

The “Record” copy is the one that has to be produced in a court action.



# Records Management

## 5. Determine the “Record” Copy.

The “Record” copy is the one that has to be produced in a court action.

It should be the one with the most information.



# Records Management

5. Determine the “Record” Copy.

All other copies are “Copies of Convenience”



# Records Management

6. Write a Records Retention Schedule for all information in the organization.
  - Based on series



# Records Management

6. Write a Records Retention Schedule for all information in the organization.
  - Based on series
  - Organized by Department or other small unit



# Records Management

6. Write a Records Retention Schedule for all information in the organization.
  - Based on series
  - Organized by Department or other small unit
  - Can be as simple as a legend or color chart taped to the filing cabinet area



# Records Management

6. Write a Records Retention Schedule for all information in the organization.
  - Include how long material is to be kept



# Records Management

6. Write a Records Retention Schedule for all information in the organization.
  - Include how long material is to be kept in each stage of the life cycle
  - Indicate the ultimate disposition of the information





# Records Management

Sample Retention Schedule Entry:

Water Department:

Contracts: Record copy of all contracts, including associated correspondence, memoranda and amendments. Maintain in office for the duration of the contract plus one year. Transfer to RHA for six years, then destroy.



# Records Management

Sample Retention Schedule Entry:

Water Department:

SCDHEC: Microbiological Sampling. Maintain in office for Five(5) years, then destroy.



# Records Management

Sample Retention Schedule Entry:

Common Records:

Correspondence: Record Copy: If paper—  
maintain in office of record for one year.  
Transfer to RHA for two years, then destroy. If  
electronic—maintain on line for one year.  
Transfer to near-line for two years, then destroy.  
Copies of Convenience—Destroy when no  
longer needed, but no later than two years after  
receipt or creation.



# Records Management

7. Get the Records Retention Schedule approved by some authority.

Your board, commission, whatever.



# Records Management

7. Get the Records Retention Schedule approved by some authority.

Your board, commission, whatever.  
As high as possible.



# Records Management

7. Get the Records Retention Schedule approved by some authority.

Your board, commission, whatever.

As high as possible.

This is your protection.



# Records Management

8. Apply the Records Retention Schedule.

To all recorded information, in whatever form or media.



# Records Management

8. Apply the Records Retention Schedule.

To all recorded information, in whatever form or media.

From now on, and backwards.





# Records Management

8. Apply the Records Retention Schedule.

To all recorded information, in whatever form or media.

From now on, and backwards.

Audit to make sure it is being done.



# Document Management

Document Management is an extension of  
Records Management



# Document Management

Document Management is an extension of  
Records Management

Every document within a series has the  
same retention period.



# Document Management

Document Management is an extension of  
Records Management

Every document within a series has the  
same retention period.

If you know which Record Series a  
document belongs to, you know its  
retention period.



# Document Management

You do not have to turn electronic documents into paper to manage them.



# Document Management

You do not have to turn electronic documents into paper to manage them.

They can be managed individually or by Electronic Document Management Software (EDMS).



# Document Management

EDMS software works by assigning a retention period to all electronic documents, usually at the moment of first filing.



# Document Management

EDMS software works by assigning a retention period to all electronic documents, usually at the moment of first filing.

It works “behind the scenes” using the Record Series concept and applying the Records Retention Schedule.





# Electronic Documents

Have the same legal standing as paper.



# Electronic Documents

Have the same legal standing as paper.

Must have the same retention period as the same document in paper would have.



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Are prone to preservation problems:

- forward migration



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Must have the same retention period as the same document in paper would have.

Are prone to preservation problems:

- forward migration
- hardware/software obsolescence



# Electronic Documents

Have the same legal standing as paper.

Must have the same retention period as the same document in paper would have.

Are prone to preservation problems:

- forward migration
- hardware/software obsolescence
- media deterioration



# Electronic Documents

Should be maintained in electronic format if at all possible preferably in a CLOUD environment.



# Electronic Documents

A SPECIAL WORD ABOUT E-MAIL



# Electronic Documents

## A SPECIAL WORD ABOUT E-MAIL

E-mail needs to be handled just like the same message written out and sent through the U. S. Post office.





# Electronic Documents

A SPECIAL WORD ABOUT E-MAIL

A huge volume of e-mail is “junk”



# Electronic Documents

A SPECIAL WORD ABOUT E-MAIL

A huge volume of e-mail is “junk”

People often send out the same e-mail to multiple recipients.



# Electronic Documents

A SPECIAL WORD ABOUT E-MAIL

E-mail “threads” can be quite cumbersome.



# Questions?



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