

**Title:**

In Case of Disaster, Save Copies of Vital Documents

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**Summary:**

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**Keywords:**

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**Article Body:**

The impact of disasters like last year's Gulf Coast hurricanes is often long-term. As victims try to put their lives back in order, they frequently face the challenge of locating important documents that might have been lost or destroyed.

For many people, it takes a disaster to remind them of the importance of having copies of vital documents safely stored somewhere other than their homes.

A recent study commissioned by The UPS Store and Mail Boxes Etc. franchise network disclosed that 58 percent of those surveyed said that natural disasters have made them more aware of this need.

Yet only 21 percent of respondents have started preparing for a natural disaster. Of those who have started preparations, just over half indicated that they have taken steps to copy important documents.

The UPS Store franchisee Steve Spicer recommends that people make copying important documents a yearly ritual.

"Tax time is the perfect time to inventory and copy necessary papers," he says. "We encourage customers to bring in important documents along with their tax returns. It just takes a few minutes and a few cents to duplicate each document."

The survey indicated that a vast majority of respondents - 71 percent - consider

their birth certificate to be among the most important documents to copy. Other documents cited include financial records, such as wills, bank records and credit card information (34 percent); insurance information (31 percent); social security card and related information (29 percent); and the deed for their house (20 percent).