

Protect Your Valuables

Online Home Inventory Makes Sure New Toys Are Covered

(NAPSA)—Holiday time means lots of gifts and other new things in your home. Before putting all those holiday gifts away, it's a good idea to record them on a home inventory. An easy-to-use checklist available on the Web can provide a room-by-room record of possessions in a home, including the actual cash value of an item and the cost to replace it. Protecting household possessions is as important as protecting a home itself.

"For most homeowners, it's nearly impossible to tell how much you own or what it's all worth without taking a home inventory," says Jonathan Bennett, senior vice president at The Hartford Financial Services Group. "The beginning of the New Year is a good time to update your home inventory by recording gifts received over the holidays or possessions acquired over the past year."

In addition, you can get extra security with a visual record of possessions. Videotapes or photographs can help in providing the detailed information to process a claim quickly. Store them in a safe deposit box or with family and friends for safekeeping.

When you update your home inventory, it's also a good time to review coverage limits.

"If you received something particularly valuable over the holidays, you may want to consider increasing coverage limits to protect that item," says Bennett.

The Hartford suggests the following tips when developing or updating a home inventory list:

- Proceed with a room-by-room



Keeping track of new presents lets you be sure they'll be covered by your insurance.

listing of all personal belongings and their estimated replacement costs.

- Don't forget closets and storage areas, or special items such as collections and valuables that may be stored away. Use a "miscellaneous" section for any items that do not fall into a room category.

- Update the inventory form periodically to reflect new items or changing values of possessions.

- Review your policy to determine if you purchased replacement cost or actual cash value coverage for your personal items, to learn if you would receive the full cost of replacing a covered possession or the actual cash value, which subtracts normal depreciation at the time of replacement.

For an inventory checklist you can use, go to www.thehartford.com/homeinventory.