

It's The Law

Putting A Price On Privacy

(NAPSA)—There are a variety of new laws that require businesses and individuals to protect and securely destroy documents that contain private customer and employee information. And most people don't know the first thing about them. A recent survey concluded that 87 percent of business owners did not know about FACTA or any other privacy-related legislation.

FACTA, HIPAA and Gramm-Leach-Bliley are three of the latest privacy protection laws and they don't just apply to big business; they apply to any individual who comes into contact with other people's private information, and non-compliance can result in heavy fines of up to \$2,500 for each person's information you've exposed.

One company, ShredStation, Inc., has developed a privacy compliance offering to help businesses and individuals assess their risks and better understand what is required to become compliant with privacy legislation.

"There has been more enforcement in the past six months than in the past five years," said Bob Johnson, executive director for The National Association for Information Destruction. "This is just the beginning. The enforcement numbers will continue to grow."

The more than 7.6 million people who work from home each month are particularly at risk. Not only can homeworkers be held financially responsible should a breach occur, but the company can also penalize or terminate you for failing to adequately protect the information. With the increased number of laws requiring docu-



Even if you work at home, you're still responsible for the protection of the confidential information you come across.

ment destruction, businesses and even households need to develop a formal plan for the proper disposal of documents.

There are a variety of ways to protect personal information and become compliant. At the core of any program is the development of a document destruction policy. The best rule of thumb is to shred everything.

"Unfortunately, very few people are aware of the laws that require proper disposal of private information and, as a result, they're breaking the law on a daily basis," said Al Villamil, president of ShredStation. "ShredStation assesses not only the penalties that someone is potentially facing, but a series of steps and methods to develop a formal plan to maintain compliance and avoid those penalties."

For more information about privacy compliance and secure document destruction, and for tips on how to prevent ID theft, visit www.shredstation.com or call (877) SHREDXP.