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**CITY TO HOLD 3RD ANNUAL SHRED FEST MAY 23RD TO HELP NEW YORKERS  
PROTECT THEIR IDENTITIES**

***First Three Participants at Each of 11 Locations Across City Will Receive Free  
Personal Shredders\****

The Department of Consumer Affairs and the Mayor's Office of the Criminal Justice Coordinator, in partnership with Department of Parks and Recreation and the Department of Sanitation, today announced that the City's 3rd annual Shred Fest, a free paper-shredding event to increase public awareness of identity theft prevention, will be held Sunday, May 23 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. New Yorkers can shred personal documents at 11 locations throughout the five boroughs. Documents will be shredded in industrial shredders mounted with TV

monitors so consumers can verify for themselves that their materials are being shredded securely. Stapled documents can be shredded, however, documents bound with metal binder clips cannot. In 2008, the state of New York reported more than 22,000 identity theft complaints. Shredding documents that contain personal identifying information before throwing them away is one of the most important ways consumers can prevent identity theft.

Consumers participating in Shred Fest will also receive information on how better to guard against identify theft and have an opportunity to receive one of 33 personal paper shredders donated by Staples. Shredding services have been generously donated by Brink's Document Destruction, USA Shred, Code Shred, Pro Shred, and Shred Services. All of the shredded paper generated by Shred Fest will be recycled.

"Shredding personal documents is one of the easiest ways to help protect yourself from identity theft," said Consumer Affairs Commissioner Jonathan Mintz. "More than 22,000 New York State residents year have their identities stolen every year, and it's happened to me personally twice. So I encourage all New Yorkers to visit a Shred Fest site and get into the habit of protecting their identities."

"Identity theft can destroy your credit and your good name," said John Feinblatt, Chief Advisor to the Mayor for Policy and Strategic Planning. "But through a few simple precautions, New Yorkers can stand up to identity thieves and avoid becoming a victim."

"The 3rd Annual Shred Fest brings to light the importance of properly disposing personal documents," said Dave D'Angelo, senior vice president of Staples Brands. "While people may think shredders are only for business use, Staples makes it easy for anyone to shred, whether at home or at the office, with the most extensive and quality line of shredders on the market. Through our support of Shred Fest, Staples is introducing people to the variety of styles and options they have to safeguard personal or business information."

New Yorkers are invited to bring mail and other documents that contain personal information to be shredded and securely disposed of including:

- Bank statements that are at least one year old and do not contain tax-related information
- Pay stubs (only after you have received your Form W-2)
- Credit card applications
- Documents that contain Social Security Numbers, account numbers, password/PIN information, birth dates, private contact information and signatures.

Free shredding will be offered at the following 11 locations:

**BRONX:**

Bronx Park (Corner of Bronx Park East and Boston Road; near Ben Abrams Playground)  
Franz Sigel Park (Corner of East 158th Street and Grand Concourse)

**BROOKLYN:**

Bensonhurst Park (Cropsey Avenue and Bay 29th Street)  
Cadman Plaza (Cadman Plaza West; opposite Clark Street)  
Prospect Park (Prospect Park West and 3rd Street)

**MANHATTAN:**

Columbus Circle (Merchant's Gate; corner of Central Park South and Central Park West)  
St. Nicholas Park (Corner of West 135th Street and St. Nicholas Avenue)  
Union Square (North Plaza; East 16th Street and Union Square West)

**QUEENS:**

Windmuller Playground (52nd Street and 39th Drive)  
Flushing Meadows Corona Park (Parking lot; 111th Street and 54th Avenue)

**STATEN ISLAND:**

Arthur Von Briesen Park (Parking lot; Bay Street & School Road)

Shred Fest is part of DCA's campaign to raise awareness about what New Yorkers can do to protect themselves from identity theft. The campaign also included the distribution of 15,000 Shred Fest flyers with identity theft prevention tips, posting of 400 Shred Fest posters in English and Spanish, and an advertising campaign with the Department of Sanitation to promote the free paper-shredding event.

For more identity theft prevention tips or to find a Shred Fest location near you, visit [nyc.gov/consumers](http://nyc.gov/consumers) or call 311. DCA enforces the Consumer Protection Law and other related business laws throughout New York City. Ensuring a fair and vibrant marketplace for consumers and businesses, DCA licenses more than 71,000 businesses in 57 different industries. Through targeted outreach, partnerships with community and trade organizations, and informational materials, DCA educates consumers and businesses alike about their rights and responsibilities. DCA's Office of Financial Empowerment is the first municipal office of its kind in the nation with a mission to educate, empower and protect New Yorkers with low incomes. DCA's OFE administers a citywide network of Financial Empowerment Centers and other products and services that help these New Yorkers make the best use of their financial resources to move forward economically. For more information, call 311 or visit DCA online at [nyc.gov/consumers](http://nyc.gov/consumers).

The Criminal Justice Coordinator is the Mayor's chief policy advisor on criminal justice matters and is responsible for developing and implementing policies, legislation, and strategies in the fields of public safety and criminal justice. The Office of the Criminal Justice Coordinator also serves as a liaison to the City's prosecutors, the New York State Office of Court Administration, and state and federal criminal justice agencies. The Coordinator's Office works closely with the City's law enforcement agencies, including the Police, Correction, Probation, and Juvenile Justice Departments.

\* City Employees not eligible

**IT'S YOUR IDENTITY...PROTECT IT! FOLLOW THESE TIPS:**

- **Shred first, trash last.** Never throw out papers with sensitive information, such as your Social Security Number, until you've shredded them.
- **Be careful when you receive suspicious telephone and e-mail offers.** Never give personal information over the phone and never click on unfamiliar e-mail links, particularly e-mails from financial service providers.
- **Safeguard your computer using antivirus and firewall software.**
- **Check receipts.** Make sure receipts do not show your credit card's expiration date or more than its last five digits.
- **Review your bank and credit card statements for unusual activity.** Monitor when your monthly bills and account statements typically arrive and review your statements carefully.
- **Check your credit report for unusual activity.** Request your free annual credit

report online at [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com) or call 1-877-322-8228.

- **Opt out of mail solicitations.** Register your address at [www.optoutprescreen.com](http://www.optoutprescreen.com) or call toll-free 1-888-567-8688.

### ALREADY AN IDENTITY THEFT VICTIM? TAKE ACTION QUICKLY:

- **Report it.** Report identity theft to your local police precinct and file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) at [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov) or call the FTC's Identity Theft Hotline toll-free at (877) ID-THEFT (438-4338) Keep copies of the report and the complaint.
- **Consider a credit freeze.** A credit freeze restricts others from accessing your credit report without your consent. Place a credit freeze by contacting the three credit reporting agencies: Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion. Visit [www.nyc.gov/consumers](http://www.nyc.gov/consumers) for more information.

### IS YOUR BUSINESS PROTECTING CUSTOMERS' INFORMATION? HERE'S HOW:

- **Implement security protocols.** Review how your business protects customer information—i.e., where information is stored and who has access to it—and change protocols as necessary to increase security. Train employees so they know the company's privacy policy and how to protect customers' personal information.
- **Ask for ID.** Employees should ask for identification when customers pay by credit card. If employees are suspicious of a transaction and think the card may be stolen, they should call the store's credit card processing service and report a "Code 10." This phrase unobtrusively alerts the credit card company of potential identity theft activity.
- **Collect less information.** Only collect the information necessary to complete the transaction and store it only as long as needed. The less customer information you store, the less you have to protect.
- **Restrict access.** Make sure documents that contain customers' identifying information, such as applications or merchant copies of credit card receipts, are not in sight of employees or the public, or otherwise accessible. A locked storage space can offer good protection.
- **Safeguard computers.** Install antivirus and firewall software on computers and regularly update it. Make sure that password-protected screen savers turn on once a computer is idle.
- **Stay current with online security measures.** Your technology manager should remain aware of new issues or areas of concern in online security. Check with the Federal Trade Commission at [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov) for recommended resources about technology updates.