



Office of the Secretary of State
Washington State Archives

Records Management Advice

Issued: November 2013
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Electronic Records Management: Hard Drives and Multipurpose Copiers/Scanners

Purpose: Provide guidance to state and local government agencies regarding the images that are stored on the hard drives of copiers and scanners.

The new generation of digital scanner/copiers and contain hard drives which often preserve a copy of every image scanned. Agencies need to pay special attention to maintaining the confidentiality and security of public records.

The images that are stored on the hard drives that are in multipurpose copier and scanning devices may contain records that are:

- Confidential
- Private
- Sensitive
- Exempt from disclosure

In many instances the images contained within the hard drive are secondary copies. It is important that agencies apply records management to properly manage and protect public records in accordance to the approved records retention schedules and all local, state and federal rules are to be followed.

There are steps that can be taken to erase images on hard drives on scanners/copiers before they are traded in. An agency will want to ensure that the images have been appropriately managed prior to any disposal, trade-in, or repurpose action that may be taken. This will protect any sensitive information from remaining on the drives and avoid potential exposure.

As new technologies are introduced, it is important that awareness is raised and concerns addressed regarding public records. Washington State Archives will continue to update and provide new advice to ensure the protection and preservation of public records.

**Additional advice regarding the management of public records is available from
Washington State Archives:**

**www.sos.wa.gov/archives
recordsmanagement@sos.wa.gov**