Shredder Recommendations

Last fall, a new state law was put into effect that mandates how the College destroys its records. Many have asked for guidance in how or what kind of shredder to purchase to reduce the risk of the College being in violation of this new law. To aid in budget planning for 2006-2007, this document can be used as a guideline when making a decision about what type of shredder to purchase.

Summary of New Law Effective September 1, 2005

Any records that contain personal identifying information, such as employee or student records, must be disposed of in a manner that will make them unreadable or undecipherable. Violation of this new law could result in a civil penalty of up to $500 plus court cost for each incident.

The use of strip shredders is in violation with the standards set in this new law. In order to avoid any chance of a breech in security when disposing of any sensitive or confidential information about employees or students, it is imperative that the College switch from using strip shredders to using cross-cut or micro-cut shredders that are in compliance with the security levels set below.

Security Levels

Just as there are new security levels set by the Department of Homeland Security, there are security levels set by the Department of Defense for shredders. To meet the standards set by the new law, the following guidelines need to be used when selecting a shredder for your department.

- Security Level 1 (for shredding general internal documents): Strip-Cut
- Security Level 2 (for shredding sensitive internal documents): Strip-Cut 1/8”
- Security Level 3 (for shredding confidential documents): Crosscut – 1/4” x 1/8”
- Security Level 4 (for shredding secret documents): Crosscut – 1/8” x 1 1/8”
- High Security Level 5 (for shredding of extremely confidential documents): Crosscut – 1/16” x 5/8”

What do You Know About Shredders?

The link below contains valuable information that will increase your knowledge about shredders.

http://www.gbc-shredder.com/shredder_help.htm
Questions to Ask Before Purchasing a Shredder

How sensitive is the material you need to shred?
Shredders cut paper into smaller, unrecognizable pieces of paper. Different shredders shred paper into different sizes of paper. The more important the document, the more important it is to use a shredder that will shred the documents into very small pieces.

How often will you need to use your shredder?
You will need to take into consideration how often you will be using your paper shredder. Some paper shredders are made only for shredding documents a few times a week, where other shredders can be used continuously. Purchasing a shredder that cannot handle the volume of shredding to be done will be very frustrating.

Would you like one large shredder, or several smaller shredders?
Some offices will buy one large shredder for all their shredding needs, where other offices will purchase several shredders and place them throughout the office.

How many sheets do you need to shred at a time?
Different shredders can shred different amounts of paper. Smaller shredders can only handle a few sheets of paper, where larger shredders can shred many sheets of paper at a time.

Will the cross-cut shredder sold at Target for $29.99 suffice?
If the cross-cut shredder sold at Target for $29.99 meets the needs of your department or office and meets either security levels 3, 4, or 5 as stated above, then the answer would be yes. If not, the answer would be no.

Other Facts about Cross-Cut Shredders

Cross-cut shredders create crisscross cut pieces of paper. These crisscross cut pieces of paper vary in size from 3/8-inch to 1/32-inch x 1/2-inch. Cross-cut shredders are not able to shred documents as quickly as strip-cut shredders (of the same class) due to the extra cutting involved. Although they can’t shred documents as quickly, cross-cut shredders are able to provide more security to shredded documents than a strip-cut shredder. The shredder by-product has less volume, thus requires less emptying and trips to the dumpster.

Recommendations

Research has been conducted to find shredders that meet or almost meet the security standards mentioned above. Personal shredders would be for those kept at the desk, while office shredders would be used by a multiple of people. The high security shredders would be used by departments that have highly confidential records. Please click on the links below.
Personal Shredder – Security Level 3

http://www.gbc-shredder.com/gbc_960x_shredder.htm

Office Shredders – Security Level 3

http://www.gbc-shredder.com/gbc_2260x_shredder.htm
http://www.gbc-shredder.com/gbc_3550x_shredder.htm
http://www.gbc-shredder.com/gbc_4550x_shredder.htm
http://www.gbc-shredder.com/gbc_5550x_shredder.htm

High Security Shredder – Security Level 4

http://www.gbc-shredder.com/gbc_3870m_shredder.htm

Heavy Duty High Security Shredder – Security Level 4

http://www.gbc-shredder.com/gbc_5570m_shredder.htm

Current price quotes for these shredders are:

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<th>Sell Price</th>
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*Shipping will be free for purchases totaling over $2,000.00. Therefore, working with Purchasing to arrange one shipment would reduce shipping cost to zero. Contact person at Clary is Kevin Wong.

It is recommended that you review the specifications of each shredder listed above and buy the best shredder(s) that meets the needs of your area.

Alternative Solution

Del Mar College uses a shredding service to shred large amounts of shredding at a time. The link below will inform you of the service that is provided by this company. The cost of this service is billed to the Records Management Office. Shred-It has a bonded Customer Service Representative that disposes of our sensitive materials in the presence of Del Mar College Purchasing/Receiving personnel. It is a secure, convenient, and cost effective way for the College to destroy documents. Departments can take advantage of this service by preparing the appropriate records management documents. Contact me for more information about this alternative solution to shredding documents.

More information about this company can be found by downloading the brochure at the following website.
http://www.shred-it.com/

As always, if you need additional help with this matter or if you have other records management needs, please contact me.

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