

CHOOSING A DOCUMENT SHREDDER

Recalling the television program *Dragnet*, the popular, much-mimicked phrase of Detective Joe Friday was “Just the facts, ma’am.” Today however, identity theft is a destructive crime style that turns the above phrase in to “Just the fax, your signature on checks and credit slips and account numbers please, ma’am!” According to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), identity theft costs American consumers \$53 billion annually. It affects some 10 million consumers—that’s huge! Document shredders play a big role in safeguarding against identity theft and will safely and effectively destroy sensitive/confidential documents.

While not all documents can be shredded because of long-term record-keeping needs, they can be secured by data management methods (file boxes, vaults, CDs, back-up tapes and more) and/or document shredding. If you are a business and need a commercial-grade paper shredder, consider the usage first.

Some features to consider are:

- Motor size for large stacks of paper
- How many users
- Maximum running length (10-15 minutes max, then cool down)
- Throat width for oversized or jumbled sheets
- Bin capacity (calculate expected usage and then double)
- Micro-shred (an 8-1/2 X 11” sheet cut into 1600 unreadable chips);
Confetti-cut (300 confetti strips) or strip-cut (1/4” strips)
- Auto-stop and/or anti-jam

For small office or personal use, consider:

- Same qualities as above except run-time is 3 minutes with 5-10 minutes cool down
- Quiet operation
- Compact
- Lightweight

Commercial shredders need more frequent lubrication and regular maintenance as the build-up of paper dust can cause clogging. Oil and lubricant sheets are readily available for shredders.

Sadly enough, statistics show that 25% of victims know the identity thief and 70% of identity occurs in the workplace, whether via a co-worker or employee(s). It is

preventable if you use caution and shred sensitive documents whenever possible.

Plus, shredded material is environmentally friendly because it can be recycled. It's typically collected, baled or pulped and used again to form boxes, copier and specialty papers and many other products.

In the Walker's 2007 Office Products Catalog, you will find information and a selection of shredders on Pages 1208-1219. Your sales associate can also answer any questions you might have.

For data and statistical information read the [Federal Trade Commissions 2003 Identity Theft Survey Report](#).