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Replaces: Records Retention, USP 4 (7/1/96)

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Objective: To explain:

- (1) the responsibility for retaining records and
- (2) the disposal of records when they no longer are needed for legal or business purposes.

Related Utility Policy:	Records Policy, section (1)(b)
Originator:	Corporate Secretary
Business Risks Involved:	<p>Failing to keep records for periods required by law, regulation, or sound business practices may expose the utility to fines and civil or criminal prosecution and prevent the utility from defending itself or pursuing legal remedies to disputes.</p> <p>Keeping records beyond periods required by law, regulation, or sound business practices may burden the utility with unnecessary storage costs.</p>
Responsibility for Monitoring Compliance:	Information sponsors ensure that records are retained as required by law, regulation, or sound business practices and are disposed of properly at the end of appropriate retention periods. The Records Center's Supervisor of Records administers the Record Retention Program, responds to questions, and provides consultation when requested.
Definitions:	<p>To clear and sanitize electronic media is to erase information stored on hard disks, diskettes, magnetic tapes, etc., so that it cannot be recovered.</p> <p>Information sponsors are appointed by officers and managers to classify and protect information originating from and/or controlled by their organizations. Such appointment does <i>not</i> relieve an officer or manager of ultimate responsibility for the information's protection and security. Information sponsors of confidential information must be utility employees.</p>

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Records include all memoranda, documents, correspondence, or other forms of tangible information storage (including photographs, microfilm, microfiche, video tapes, electronic media, sound recordings, etc.). Records include, but are not limited to, deeds, contracts, minute books, corporate seals, financial and accounting documents, and other documents relating to asset ownership, contractual obligations, or corporate governance.

Major Steps:

a. How are record retention periods determined?

Information sponsors must adhere to record retention periods set by relevant laws and regulations (see the *Federal and State Retention Guidelines* on the Record Retention Intranet web site). Information sponsors may set longer retention periods than legally are required in order to meet administrative, operating, or claims related needs. However, they should minimize such additional requirements to control storage costs.

b. Where are retention schedules kept?

The *Guide to Record Retention* is available from the Records Center and is on the Record Retention Intranet web site.

Information sponsors may add records to the *Guide to Record Retention* by forwarding a list to the Records Center's Supervisor of Records. The list must specify the exact title of the record, the form or report number (if applicable), and all essential retention period information.

Note: Retention periods in the *Guide to Record Retention* are valid only as of the date issued. Additional retention may be necessary to comply with new or changed legal or regulatory requirements effective after issuance of the *Guide*.

c. Who retains records?

Information sponsors retain records under their care for the appropriate periods, ensuring that information is classified, labeled, and protected in accordance with appropriate utility standard practices and procedures. (Refer to the "See Also" section.) They retain active records locally and may send inactive records with long retention periods to the Records Center or another storage facility. For example, computer tapes may be sent to the Fairfield Information and Operations Center for long-term storage.

d. How do I send records to the Records Center?

See the Shipping Records procedures on the Record Retention web site. The records transmittal form also is on the web site.

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e. How do I retrieve records from the Records Center?

See the Requesting Records procedures on the Record Retention web site.

f. How do I send or retrieve records from other storage facilities?

Each storage facility supervisor establishes procedures for sending records to that specific storage facility and retrieving records from it.

g. What happens at the end of the retention period?

When records at the Records Center or other storage facility become eligible for disposal, the storage facility supervisor submits a list to the information sponsor. The information sponsor must confirm with the storage facility supervisor within 30 days of the date of the notice that the records should be destroyed. The information sponsor also must specify the length of time and reason for any additional retention period.

Information sponsors are responsible for establishing procedures to ensure that locally-stored hard copy and electronic records are not retained beyond the appropriate retention periods.

h. How are records disposed of?

i) Hard copy records, including paper, microfilm, and photographs.

All records classified as "PG&E Confidential Information" must be destroyed by shredding, witnessed by a utility representative.¹

To the extent possible, records classified as "PG&E Public Information" or "PG&E Internal Information" should be recycled by a recycling firm.¹ Non-recyclable media may be discarded in the trash.

Duplicate records should be destroyed, recycled, or discarded, as appropriate, as soon as they have served their intended purpose and proper retention of the original document has been verified (e.g., receipt of the Records Transmittal from the Records Center or other storage facility).

To destroy records located in the General Office complex, contact personnel at the loading dock at 77 Beale Street. A destruction label (Form 62-1370) must be affixed to all storage boxes to be destroyed.

¹ Refer to Classification and Legal Protection of Information, USP 8, for guidance on the three classifications of utility information.



ii) *Electronic records*

"PG&E Confidential Information" must be cleared and sanitized from electronic media in accordance with Protection of Computer Resources and Electronic Information, USP 9, and Protecting Electronic Information, CP 3, issued by Computer and Telecommunications Services. (Pressing the "delete" key does not clear and sanitize information from electronic media.)

Electronic media that contains only "PG&E Public Information" or "PG&E Internal Information" may be overwritten or discarded in the trash, as appropriate.

i. *Are there special requirements for different types of records?*

Accounting records: Officers and information sponsors share retention responsibility with the Controller. Keep accounting records relating to additions or retirements from Federal Licensed Projects and the establishment of related amortization reserves until the Controller authorizes disposal.

Contracts: Send the original of every short-form and long-form contract to Building and Land Services, Document Management Services, 245 Market, Mail Code NOB1X, San Francisco. These contracts will be available electronically to authorized persons throughout the utility.

Environmental records: Document retention periods vary considerably. Before disposal, the information sponsor must ensure that all statutory and regulatory requirements for document retention have been satisfied. (When in doubt, consult with Environmental Services or the Law Department.)

Nuclear records: Follow regulatory requirements and Nuclear Power Generation's policies and procedures.

Subsidiary company records: Retain these records separately from those of the utility and other companies, but in a manner comparable to similar utility files and records.

See Also:


1. Documents available through the Records Center:
 - *Federal and State Retention Guidelines* (also available on the Record Retention web site)
 - *Guide to Record Retention* (also available on the Record Retention web site)
 - Departmental index of records in storage

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2. Utility Standard Practices:
 - Classification and Legal Protection of Information, USP 8
 - Protection of Computer Resources and Electronic Information, USP 9
 - Service of Legal Papers, SP 270-1
3. Record Retention Intranet web site (General Categories, Information and Reference, Record Retention)
4. Procedure:
 - Protecting Electronic Confidential Information, CP 3 (issued by Computer and Telecommunications Services)

Contact Person:


Supervisor of Records - Records Center

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