

March 2011

Dear Clients and Friends:

Is it just me, or are companies sending more junk mail with this improving economy? The average American household receives unsolicited mail adding up to 1.5 trees every year. Do the math and that's 100 million trees disappearing every year, to send people information they mostly don't want.

We live in a free country and so far the courts are upholding the First Amendment to our Constitution, so it's hard to imagine a legal way you could ever prevent someone from sending you mail. But there are ways to cut back on unwanted advertising.

You can start by registering with the Direct Marketing Association, which works with nearly 3,600 companies around the world. Members are required to respect the mail preferences you register at www.dmachoice.org. You can stop direct mail in any of the following categories: credit offers, catalogs, magazine offers, and other solicitations such as donation requests, bank offers and retail promotions. Non-member companies check their database as well, to avoid sending mail where it's not wanted.

Next you should go to OptOutPreScreen.com, a service of the four major credit bureaus. This enables you to remove your name from lists used by mortgage, credit card and insurance companies to mail you offers and solicitations.

If you're serious about avoiding unwanted mail, tell companies you do business with to put you on their "do not promote" or "in-house suppress" lists. You can file that request at any time, but it works best when you make your first transaction, before they've had a chance to sell your name to other organizations.

Regards,



Charles M. Shackelford