

**West Virginia Executive Branch
Privacy Tip of the Week
Summer Vacation Tip**

Periodically, the Privacy Office may issue tips for the purpose of assisting you in making informed decisions in your “away from work” life. The following tip is for that purpose.

A Photo is Worth a Thousand Memories

So many of us entrust our vacation memories to digital media. Losing access to those images can be devastating. A laptop or desktop computer can be an unreliable storage space for treasured photos – a hard drive crash can wipe away your memories forever.

Below are five steps to ensure safety and security of personal media:

1. Immediately upon downloading new photos or videos, copy them to an external hard drive.
2. Make a second copy to a USB drive.
3. If sending a photo or video to someone via email, CC yourself so you have a third copy.
4. After making two or three backup copies (and visually confirming they are indeed on those backup devices and locations), delete your tiny memory card and re-use it until it is no longer functional.
5. When posting to a social networking site, it is advisable to turn off your location settings. Your pictures will be “tagged” in a geographical location-giving notice that you are not at home. Never post anything on a social network that is not suitable for (literally) the entire world to see. No matter how secure a site says it is, it cannot absolutely guarantee your information is completely secure.