



If you must go, have this ready

This summer has brought wildfires and power outages that have caused many to leave home in a hurry. Leatrice Urbanowicz of Frederick, Md., suggests keeping a "grab and go" box with all your important documents. Make it small and fireproof, and stash a little cash for immediate needs.

A small, secure box is best for quick escapes.



Put your name, address and phone number in permanent marker on the outside of the box, too. That way, in case of a house fire, tornado or worse, your items are more likely to be recovered.

Have a bright idea? Share it with us at livesmart.usaweekend.com.

USA WEEKEND Magazine
usaweekend.com
Telephone: 800-487-2956
E-mail: usaw@usaweekend.com

© Copyright 2012 USA WEEKEND.
A Gannett publication.
Printed in the USA.
Since 1953, your Family Weekly.
The magazine that makes a difference.

Relax: Procrastination can be productive

IF YOU'VE MASTERED the art of waiting until the 11th hour to complete the task at hand, you may be more productive than you think. A new study finds that people who take a break from an intellectual task to do some mindless activity, then return to it, perform about 41% better after the break than those who never deviate.

Delayers get a bad rap in our culture, something that John Perry, professor emeritus of philosophy at Stanford University and author of *The Art of Procrastination*, would like to change. "For the most part, procrastinators actually get a lot done," he says.

Perry points out that on a deadline, procrastinators become masters of file-organizing. Although the

quarterly report may not get done until 10 minutes before it's due, the previous week at the office hasn't been a waste. "Some people think the solution is to eliminate all other distractions from your life," says Perry, a self-proclaimed procrastinator. "That's bad advice. The more things a procrastinator has to do, the more productive he'll be."

A procrastinator's biggest vice: the computer. Unplug your laptop before using it, which initiates an automatic shutdown time.

"Self-manipulation will help you keep procrastinating under control," Perry says. "It's not a matter of willpower — it's

Delayers get a bad rap.



knowing your tendencies and staying one step ahead."

— Julia Savacool



Refresh your midsummer garden

AUGUST CAN BE discouraging for any gardener: Leaves look brown, flowers produce fewer buds, and delicate plants wilt in the heat. Rather than throw in the trowel, revitalize your garden, suggests Burpee Seed Co. CEO and Chairman

George Ball. Here are some tips from the third-generation seedsman:

Just add water. In late summer and fall, humidity declines, causing soil moisture to evaporate quicker. Creating a watering schedule and sticking to it is more important than ever.

Be sure to water in the morning, when roots are driest; resist the urge to douse plants throughout the day. "It's better to underwater than overwater, because the roots will drown," Ball says. "If the plant looks hungry or thirsty, it'll droop just a little bit. That's when you want to soak it."

Think green. It's not too late to add fast-growing veggies to the patch. Ball's suggestion: "Concentrate on your leafy greens, like collard greens, mustard greens and salad greens."

Spinach and leaf lettuce take only 30 days to mature and can be planted as late as September.

Have fun. Why not show off the fruits of your labor with a party in the backyard, with your crops as refreshments? Ball recommends "garden-gating," a homey, family-friendly version of tailgating. "You can use freshly picked vegetables and grill them with brats and beer and watch the big game on an outdoor TV." How about garden-gating for the Olympics? □

— Joanna Hlavacek