

## STORAGE FACILITIES

Computer data and paper records should be stored in off-site storage facilities. Paper records are traditionally sent after they are no longer actively accessed, usually after one year. Computer data should be sent on a daily or weekly basis. Off-site storage of paper records is required by law and is important to prevent loss of historic documentation. A records retention schedule indicates how long these records must be kept.

Computer data and software should be backed up often and stored off-site. This ensures that the minimum amount of data would be lost should there be a computer failure.

Not all storage facilities are the same or maintain high standards. Visit the storage facility. Determine that the institution's materials are stored properly and safely. Are the records easily located? What does the storage facility do when the area is full? You don't want to find that your vital records or data tapes are stored in an outside "U-Stor-It" or rental space that is vulnerable to water, insects, or rodents and provides no physical security.