

# PAY YOUR MONTHLY BILLS – SIMPLY

Manage your monthly payments with a simple system that keeps everything you need in one place. After you establish the system, you will find that paying your bills becomes more streamlined and less of a struggle.

## Bill-Paying Kit (to keep everything you need in one place)

- ▶ Some large manila envelopes labeled:
  - “Bills to be paid by the 10<sup>th</sup>”
  - “Bills to be paid by the 25<sup>th</sup>”
  - “Charge card receipts”
  - “Paid” – you’ll need a new “Paid” envelope for each month (or quarter).
- ▶ Stamps
- ▶ Blank envelopes and return address labels
- ▶ Small calculator, pens, pencils, markers
- ▶ Zip-Loc bag for keeping smaller items together
- ▶ Basket, bag or folder that is large enough to hold all the items in your Kit.

## Bill-Paying System

On your calendar, write yourself reminders on the 10<sup>th</sup> and the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month: “Pay Bills”.

*When you receive a bill or statement, open the envelope on the same day it arrives. Keep only the bill and the return envelope. Toss any offers, notices or other loose papers. Put the bill into the manila envelope labeled “Bills to be paid by the 10<sup>th</sup>” or “Bills to be paid by the 25<sup>th</sup>”.*

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month and the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month, take out your Bill-Paying Kit.

1. Before you write this month’s check, look at the balance on the current bill or statement to verify that last month’s payment was credited to your account.
2. Write the check, and write your account number on the face of the check to ensure that your payment will be properly credited.
3. Enter the check number and the payment amount into your check register.
4. Write the payment amount, the check number and the date on the face of the bill or statement. Put the bill or statement into the “Paid” envelope for this month (or quarter).
5. Put a stamp on the return envelope. Put the check and the return statement inside, making sure that the address shows in the envelope window.
6. Put stamped envelopes in your coat pocket or on top of your briefcase or purse for mailing.

If you like technology – and if you are comfortable with technology – you may want to investigate electronic bill paying. Automatic deductions and/or Internet bill-paying can simplify financial paperwork. Of course, electronic bill-paying is not a good idea if your bank accounts are not stable, i.e., if you frequently have over-drafts.