



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**MASTER LOCK EASES TAX SEASON STRESS  
WITH SWEEPSTAKES AND TIPS FOR AN ORGANIZED FILING**

*Tax Relief Reward Sweepstakes offers Master Lock Vault® users chance to win \$1,000*

**MILWAUKEE, Wis. (March 17, 2014)** – On average, Americans spend 13 hours filing their taxes – nearly half of that time devoted to record keeping to complete the tax filing process\*. Today Master Lock is providing consumers with advice to make filing less taxing this year. As an added bonus, consumers across the U.S. and Canada are invited to register for a [Master Lock Vault](#) account – a safe and secure online storage and organization system – and submit an entry for a chance to win one of five, \$1,000 prizes in the Master Lock “Tax Relief Rewards” Sweepstakes.

“Even if your personal tax situation is not complicated, there are still several documents taxpayers need to keep track of for what the IRS demands,” said Rebecca Smith, vice president, marketing for Master Lock. “Getting organized can help remove the stress involved with meeting the April 15 deadline, and by using the Master Lock Vault, preparing to file your taxes properly will be a breeze.”

Follow these five tips to help you get organized to file your taxes this season\*\*:

- 1. Get your wages in order.** When the new year rolls around, begin thinking about your past year’s employment. Whether you’re self-employed, an independent contractor or an employee, there are certain forms you need to submit to properly file your income.

Employers are required to provide all employees a Form W-2 showing how much was earned, how much was taxable and what taxes were withheld from your wages. If you have more than one job, a Form W-2 is required from each employer. However, if you’re an independent contractor a Form 1099 is required from companies you worked for to show gross earnings. Those who are self-employed require a bit more work. Before filing, make sure all receipts and documentation for business-related expenses are in order – mileage records, office equipment and supplies, utility bills, etc.

- 2. Go digital.** Avoid the mess of a mound of paperwork from income wages, to auto and home loans, gifts to charity and more by storing – and organizing – all of your tax-related documents digitally. Scan documents and upload as you go through your paperwork, then shred and recycle the hard copies. Even if you opt to keep hard copies, a digital back-up is an important safeguard should your paper documents ever be lost, misplaced, stolen or damaged.

By utilizing a free, secure service such as the Master Lock Vault ([www.masterlockvault.com](http://www.masterlockvault.com)) you’ll have easy access to all of your files wherever you are. Not only can you upload PDF forms, but you can upload photos from your phone of important receipts and expenses for your records. All data is instantly synchronized between the website and the App. Bonus: securely store log-in

information for your bank accounts and tax filing site in the Master Lock Vault so you'll never have to worry about forgetting your username or password.

- 3. Devise a filing system.** Whether you've upgraded to a digital storage solution or are preparing your hard copies for the switch, it's important to decide how to group your paperwork and documents together – digitally or physically.

It's helpful to group all income statements, documents and necessary forms together as well as paid invoices or other evidence of income. Next, all your deductions should be stored in one place – mortgage interest payments, property taxes, charitable gifts and medical bills. Finally, keep track of and file or scan all receipts in one place and organize your receipts by type, for example: bills, travel, utilities, insurance, fuel costs, etc. Most importantly, once you devise a filing system, remember to do the easiest thing – use it!

- 4. Decide how to file.** If you choose to do your own taxes, deciding on a software service can be difficult, and for married or recently married couples, deciding to file jointly or separately can be a hard decision. However, one of the more important decisions is whether or not to electronically file.

With U.S. e-filing becoming more and more popular, faster, safer and generally more convenient than paper, the biggest benefit to electronic filing is that you will receive a confirmation within 24 hours that the IRS has received your tax return. The confirmation can give many taxpayers a sigh of relief knowing that the IRS has received it, accepted it and is beginning to process your paperwork. If something goes wrong, a rejection will be sent within 24 hours and will tell you how to fix it. What's more is that when you electronically file, the IRS issues refunds within 21 days if you're eligible for one.

For more information on how to electronically file, visit: <http://www.irs.gov/Filing>.

- 5. Prepare for next year.** Once you've nailed down a filing system, remember to think taxes year-round. It's much easier to pick up already-filed papers or digital folder than go through billing statements, piles of papers and online accounts to gather your documents for next year.

It's also important to keep up with changes in tax laws for the new tax year to ensure your documents are in line. If you use a tax preparer, now might be the time to discuss where you could net out next year. Changes in marital status or dependents may impact what you could expect to pay or receive as a refund next year, and if you're self-employed or handle accounting for a business, now might be the time to make a major purchase or sell equipment.

#### **Master Lock "Tax Relief Rewards" Sweepstakes**

An added bonus of utilizing the Master Lock Vault to organize the tax filing process this year is the chance to win \$1,000 which can be used to supplement your tax refund, or help ease the burden of additional taxes owed. To enter, new users can register for a Master Lock Vault account at [www.MasterLockVault.com](http://www.MasterLockVault.com). Once the account has been activated, users will receive an email containing the sweepstakes entry form. Existing Master Lock Vault users who have opted in for brand communications will receive an email with the sweepstakes entry form once the sweepstakes kicks off March 17. One entry will be accepted per person through April 16, when the sweepstakes closes, and five winners will be drawn at random.

**Master Lock Vault**

Benefits of the Master Lock Vault extend well beyond the tax season. Use the system year-round, via the website or by installing one of the free mobile apps for your Apple®, Android®, Kindle® or Nook® devices. Securely store and organize lock combinations, digital copies of your passport and social security card and other confidential data such as debit or PIN card numbers or online credit card account log-in information. Offering a high level of online security, the Master Lock Vault serves as a digital safe deposit box for quick and easy access to valuable information anytime, anywhere.

For more information and to get started, visit [www.masterlockvault.com](http://www.masterlockvault.com).

**About Master Lock**

Master Lock is the world's largest manufacturer of [padlocks](#) and related security products providing innovative security solutions for home, automotive, campus, power sports, bike and storage security needs for consumers and industry alike. Master Lock Company LLC is an operating unit of Fortune Brands Home & Security, Inc., a leading consumer brands company. Headquartered in Deerfield, Ill., Fortune Brands Home & Security, Inc. (NYSE: FBHS) is included in the S&P MidCap 400 Index. For more information about Master Lock, visit [www.masterlock.com](http://www.masterlock.com).

**About the Sweepstakes**

**NO PURCHASE NECESSARY TO ENTER OR WIN.** Entry into the Master Lock "Tax Relief Rewards" Sweepstakes is open to permanent lawful residents of the 50 United States, the District of Columbia ("D.C.") and Canada, excluding Quebec, who are 18 years or older at time of entry. Limit one (1) entry per person. Sweepstakes begins at 07:00:01 a.m. CDT on March 17, 2014 and ends on April 16, 2014 at 6:59:59 a.m. CDT. Entrants can access [www.masterlockvault.com](http://www.masterlockvault.com) and follow the on-screen instructions to create a Master Lock Vault account, which will generate a confirmation message containing a link to the Sweepstakes entry form. Existing, opt-in subscribers will receive an email containing a link to the Sweepstakes entry form. For complete rules, go to [http://www.masterlock.com/pdfs/ML\\_Tax\\_Relief\\_Rewards\\_SS\\_Rules.pdf](http://www.masterlock.com/pdfs/ML_Tax_Relief_Rewards_SS_Rules.pdf).

**Sponsor:** Master Lock Company LLC, 137 W. Forest Hill Avenue, Oak Creek, WI 53154.

\*[1040 \(2012\) IRS.gov](http://www.irs.gov)

\*\*Master Lock is not a legal, tax or accounting advisor, and the information in this press release should not be construed as legal, tax or accounting advice. Master Lock recommends that consumers consult a professional advisor for advice concerning specific tax or other matters.

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