



Spring Cleaning ~ TUFA style

By Roger Ward

AT LEAST IN ATLANTA, it feels like spring. Temperatures are up, the sun is out, people are taking their lunches outside, and the pollen sufferers are starting to suffer.

With spring comes the idea of spring cleaning. With regards to your finances we believe spring is a great time to “clean up” your personal finances. We usually break finances down into two broad areas – financial planning and investments. So we’ll address our spring cleaning recommendations in those two areas:

Financial Planning

1. *Revisit your goals.* Maybe you made a resolution to reduce your debt this year. If so, did you quantify that goal and put it in writing. If not, you need to do that. If you did, have you made progress with almost a quarter of the year passed? Maybe you wanted to consider a career change or travel. How are you doing on those goals? Are they still appropriate? Were they too small? Whatever your goal(s), don’t let them get lost in the rush of daily activities.
2. *Have you organized your important records?* Do you have them safe and secure and accessible in the event of an evacuation type emergency? If not, take a look at the following resources for ideas:
www.fema.gov
www.redcross.org
www.360financialliteracy.org
3. *Estate Planning.* Estate planning is one of the most important but most often ignored parts of financial planning. Answer the following questions to see if you have some work to be done in the estate planning area?

Do I have a will?
Have I read it lately?
Does it still accurately address my estate disposition desires?
Do I have a current Durable General Power of Attorney (for financial matters)?
Do I have a current Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care?
Do I have a Living Will?
If married, does my spouse have the same?

If you answered no to any of these questions, you probably have some “cleaning” to do. Look at the following resources to get some education in this area:

www.nolo.com
www.360financialliteracy.org

4. *Long Term Health Care*. If you are in your 50’s or 60’s or have your own small business, it’s worth considering if long term care insurance should be a part of your financial plan.
5. *Property and Casualty insurance*
Are your homeowners and auto policies up to date?
Do you have an umbrella liability policy? If you don’t should you?
6. *Life and Disability Insurance*
Do you have enough and the right kind of life insurance?
Do you have a consolidated list of all your outstanding life insurance policies?
If still working, is your disability insurance adequate for your needs?

Investment Portfolios

For Tarpley & Underwood Financial Advisors clients, much of the “spring cleaning” that is required is taken care of on a proactive basis through the service we provide. Specifically:

- Making sure that portfolios are invested consistent with your investment objectives.
- Making sure that your portfolios are diversified.
- Making sure that your portfolios have the appropriate amount of liquidity.

- Making sure that the expenses of managing your portfolios are controlled.
- Making sure that your portfolios are rebalanced in a disciplined and tax efficient manner.

However there are some portfolio management issues that you should consider as a part of your spring cleaning:

Simplify your portfolios' reporting and management process.

Cutting down on the pieces of financial related paper you receive on a monthly or quarterly basis, makes it easier to know what you have and efficiently manage what you have. To achieve this simplification, try the following:

- If you have 401ks with old employers or old IRAs or SEP-IRAs that you have forgotten about, now is the time to consolidate those accounts into one IRA.
- If you accounts setup directly with mutual fund companies, consider consolidating them in a discount brokerage account. It will simplify your reporting greatly.
- If you are holding individual securities in your portfolio, consider diversifying them into mutual funds or some form of broader portfolio.

How Tarpley & Underwood Financial Advisors Can Help

As you review these items, if you would like to discuss them or find out how to do a personal finance Spring Cleaning, please feel free to contact us at 770.730.5010 to see if we can help.