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FINNEY INJURY LAW
- TRIAL LAWYERS -

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PLAY SPRING-CLEANING SMART WITH THESE SAFE-DISPOSAL SERVICES

Spring officially hits on March 19, which means many of you will be ready to deep-clean the house or office. Getting rid of old clutter plays a big part in spring-cleaning, but it's important to remember many items shouldn't just go into your garbage and, eventually, the landfill. Here are some great options in the St. Louis area for where to properly dispose of common items.

PAPER PRODUCTS

This is especially useful information for offices cleaning out old files, documents, paper supplies, and even books. Places like **Central Paper Stock** not only accept all your old files, but they also safely and securely shred and destroy them. Depending on the material, they'll even repurpose them into new products to resell. Even if your papers have sticky glues, pesky staples, or are hardcover books, their recycling equipment can handle it. Central Paper Stock is located at 6665 Jonas Place in St. Louis.

HOUSEHOLD MATERIALS

These include a wide range of items, like electronics, scrap metal, paint, lawn equipment, and more. If there's anything

you're unsure about, bring it to **Earthbound Recycling** at 25 Truitt Drive in Eureka. They accept free drop-offs like old cell phones, rechargeable batteries, printer ink, a variety of scrap metal like copper and aluminum, and electronics like computers, laptops, and TVs. In some cases, they may even pay you for these items. For a small fee, they will safely recycle household paints and chemicals, as well as regular recyclables like plastic and glass. It's a great one-stop-shop to safely dispose of many household wares.

APPLIANCES

These can be a little more challenging to safely dispose of, but instead of just tossing them out, if they're still in working condition, consider donating them to charitable organizations like **Goodwill** or **Salvation Army**. Major appliances like refrigerators, washers, dryers, and water heaters have long been banned from landfill disposal, so hauling services like **Freeman Junk Removal** will pick up and properly dispose of your appliances for a small fee if they're not fit for donation.

Keep our community healthy and safe by being conscious of how you do your spring-cleaning this year!



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OUR TECHNOLOGY

Yesterday, I deposed a defense medical expert for three hours in Chicago. We routinely send records out to be summarized for easier review in India. We are in the midst of litigating a serious traumatic brain injury case in South Carolina. We house all of our scanned documents on a highly secure and robust server in Miami, and we do all of this from our office in St. Louis.

Technology has changed the way we practice. As I cross examined this defense doctor for three hours via Zoom, I thought about how nice it was to have everything I needed right in front of me in case something came up. I didn't have to pack everything up, slog to the airport at 4 a.m., hope my flight was on time, hope I got to the court reporter's location in time, make my return flight, waste a day traveling, etc. Instead, I spent the rest of the day working on other cases after the deposition. The only issue we had with the sound during the depo was the sirens going off in Chicago. The rest of the quality was superb.

We use an inter-office communication system known as Slack. It may be our most valuable asset. Our whole office, including our freelancers in India, use the system to communicate. We send documents, updates, letters, quick messages, and more through it. It makes our work smoother, it makes our communication cleaner, and it makes

us more organized. All of this results in a better service being provided to the client, which is our ultimate goal.

We have a freelancer in India who is amazing. We send her something one day, and we wake up to it the next, no questions asked. We can outsource smaller projects to her like organizing or summarizing records and have it returned in a week or so. She provides meticulous details and top-notch work. We found her through UpWork. It is another practice that has allowed us to work on more pressing items, which always seem to pop up.

These days, I can present exhibits on my iPad to the jury. I use an \$89 software to deftly present documents to the jury and highlight what is important and what is not. I use it during depositions, as well. There's no need for the big foam boards or lugging tons of boxes around anymore. We basically show up to trial with a few boxes and a TV, and we are ready to go.

It makes me optimistic as to what else we will be able to do in the next few years. I remember just five or so years ago, I had to pack up everything in rolling briefcases when I wanted to go to a deposition or had to travel. I hated it. It was heavy, annoying, and inefficient. Don't get me wrong, modern tech does not come without its headaches. For two weeks, we couldn't access our files in Miami



because of server issues. We couldn't access them just this past week for a day or so, which can be crippling to our practice. I guess that is the trade off with technology — when it works, its unbeatable. When it doesn't, you are literally at a standstill and begging for help. It's funny how the same thing can cause such drastically different reactions. I'm sure that is not unique to technology. Anyway, as we continue to build on how we can help you, we are looking forward to the next developments and how we can use them to do our jobs better.

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MOTORCYCLISTS ARE PEOPLE, TOO

SLOW DOWN AND KEEP THEM SAFE

Spring is on the horizon, and warmer weather means motorcyclists will be on the road more frequently. Data shows that motorcyclists are 28 times more likely to die in a crash than a car passenger. Avoid contributing to that statistic by instilling these critical safety practices on the road.

PLAY LOOKOUT

The best phrase to keep in mind when you're behind the wheel of a car is "look twice, save a life." Motorcycles are much smaller and slimmer than any other vehicle on the road, so they can easily slip into a car's blind spots without warning. Take a moment to adequately look around you, and then look again, before changing lanes or making turns.

SIZE THINGS UP

Again, because motorcycles are small, their size and speed can be deceptive. If you see a motorcycle in the distance, whether it's out your window or in one of your mirrors, always assume they're closer than they look. Their size

creates the illusion that they're further away from your car than they actually are, and they are often traveling much faster than you anticipate.

SLOW DOWN

While the same logistics of stopping distance generally apply to both motorcycles and cars, motorcycles have the ability to begin slowing down without applying pressure to the brakes. This means the motorcycle in front of you is potentially slowing down before the brake lights come on to warn you. So, if you're behind a motorcycle, reduce your speed, and put extra distance between you.

Motorcyclists have just as much right to be safe as other drivers. Everyone should strive to abide by best driving practices, but we know accidents still happen. If you've been injured in any type of vehicle accident, call our office so we can help.

THE POWER OF PRETEND

IMAGINARY FRIENDS PROMOTE REAL LIFE SKILLS

Studies show that up to 50% of young children have imaginary companions, ranging from entirely conjured entities to beloved stuffed animals. The popular social stigma around imaginary friends is that these children must be shy or lonely, but psychologists disagree. In fact, if your child develops an imaginary friend, most psychologists say it's an activity you should promote instead of discourage.

Psychologists claim that the invention of an entire friendly persona points to the fact that the child is both creative and highly social. Imaginary scenarios also give kids an opportunity to indulge in their wildest aspirations, like going to the moon or inventing a time machine. Their creativity gives them the ability to dream, explore, and

experiment in useful ways. Imaginary friends can also be there to comfort your child when they're feeling down or experiencing a tantrum, which is helpful when they are learning how to manage their emotions.

There are also many ways parents can take part in interactions with imaginary friends to strengthen their own relationship with their child. Imaginary friends can make interactive play more meaningful and can be useful in accomplishing daily routines, like cleaning up or getting ready for bed. They also provide a window into the way your child's mind works by encouraging the vocalization of thoughts and feelings they may not otherwise share. Imaginary friends are often a proxy for the children who

invent them, so the conversations your child has with or about their friend can provide a lot of insight into how your child views the world and themselves.

Imaginary friends are so important to how some children learn and grow that they've been featured in pop culture for many years. Entertainment like "Calvin and Hobbes," "Foster's Home for Imaginary Friends," and even adult shows like "Supernatural" — which featured an episode about a main character's childhood imaginary friend returning to teach him valuable lessons as an adult — portray the inventors of imaginary friends as outgoing and creative. It just goes to show that letting the imagination run wild not only encourages healthy development but can also lead to lots of fun.

DIGGING FOR THE TRUTH

FOIA LAWSUITS THAT CHANGED HOW AMERICANS PARTICIPATE IN DEMOCRACY

The Freedom of Information Act, commonly referred to as FOIA, has been a crucial part of the democratic system for decades. It was designed to improve public access to governmental records, but unfortunately, it doesn't always work as intended. In most cases, requests are only answered if a lawsuit is filed. Nevertheless, FOIA has had a crucial role in many high-profile legal cases. Here are a couple of the most significant ones in American history.

A JOURNALIST'S 16 YEARS IN COURT

California-based journalist Seth Rosenfeld has had some serious contention with the FBI. In 1985, he filed his first lawsuit against the FBI for ignoring his requests for information about the Berkeley protests of the 1960s. The case was eventually settled in 1996, and Rosenfeld was awarded \$560,000 in fees. In their settlement agreement, the FBI agreed to be more thorough with FOIA requests.

Rosenfeld filed a second lawsuit in 2007 accusing the FBI of withholding information during former President Ronald Reagan's presidency. Five years later, he was awarded \$479,459 in attorney fees. Rosenfeld is known for having some of the longest-pending FOIA requests and has received over 300,000 pages of FBI documents since the 1980s.

THE SCOMM SCANDAL

In a landmark FOIA settlement concluded in 2013, the federal government paid \$1.2 million to settle a suit brought by several civil rights groups over the Secure Communities (SCOMM) Immigration and Customs Enforcement program. The litigation exposed a plan to create a multi-agency database focused on collecting DNA, a person's gait, and iris scans. When evidence was uncovered during the litigation, governors of New York, Illinois, and Massachusetts tried to opt their states out of the program, but the Department of Homeland Security determined SCOMM mandatory, according to the Center for Constitutional Rights. The case also changed how the government is required to identify, collect, and produce data for all FOIA requests.

Thanks to FOIA and these important cases, the people's right to government information (and honesty) will continue to progress in America's democracy.



GREEN VELVET CHEESECAKE BARS

Inspired by AboutAMom.com

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup graham cracker crumbs
- 1 cup chocolate graham cracker crumbs
- 1 stick butter, melted
- 1 oz green food coloring (gel works best)
- 3 8-oz packages cream cheese, softened
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1/2 tsp vanilla extract
- Green sprinkles, optional

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat oven to 350 F, and line a 9x9-inch baking pan with parchment paper.
2. In a large bowl, combine crumbs, butter, and food coloring. Press into the baking pan.
3. In a separate bowl, beat cream cheese and sugar together.
4. Add eggs one at a time and stir in vanilla.
5. Pour mixture over the packed crumbs.
6. Bake for 40 minutes or until the center is set.
7. Let cool completely before adding sprinkles and slicing.

YOUR REFERRALS MEAN THE WORLD TO US

There is no greater compliment we can receive than a client telling a friend or loved one about us. If you know somebody who has been injured and needs an attorney who will fight on their behalf and give their case the attention it deserves, please pass along this newsletter and have them give us a call at 314-293-4222. Thank you for spreading the word about Finney Injury Law.