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SUMMER IS OVER, NOW GET BUSY PLANNING

My column usually focuses on a particular aspect of estate planning such as a type of Trust or various Wills. I define them, and then explain how they work and how they can be of benefit. However, one aspect of estate planning that is rarely discussed is when the appropriate time in your life is to actually consider a plan.

As any estate planning attorney will tell you, most people simply don't want to focus on that part of their lives. The smart ones do, however. During the summer when you were traveling or at friends homes for parties and barbeques, did anything happen to make you consider the need to protect your assets? Was there a close call or did someone suffer a minor injury that could have been worse, while at your house or in your car? Did it make you stop and think, am I protected? What would happen to my family if anything like that happened to me?

If any of those thoughts went through your head, then you obviously have something or someone in your life that you want to protect and take care of. I always tell my clients that there are three events in a person's life when estate planning **MUST** be considered. 1) When you get married, 2) when you have children, 3) when you purchase your first home. With each of these events, there is an estate planning tool that will protect your spouse, children and family home. At the very least you will need a Will which will provide for your spouse and family financially and protect your minor children.

So rather than discuss a particular estate planning instrument this time, perhaps you should simply read today's column as a reminder to consider your current estate plan. And remember that not having an estate plan at all is, in fact, a plan. It's just not a good one.

Now that we're all back to work and the kids are in school, take a few moments to list what you have in the way of a plan and compare it to your list of assets and loved ones. Then ask yourself, is my family adequately protected? Is my estate protected from taxes? Have I prepared my estate so that my children will be cared for both financially and personally if something should happen to me?

And don't forget the very important aspect of asset protection during your lifetime. Remember that a good estate plan doesn't just prepare for your departure from this wonderful life. It also protects you, your family and possessions from being subject to creditors, liens and spendthrifts.

Now's the time. Before you know it, you'll be consumed with the winter holidays. I



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understand that considerations such as death and family losses are not hot topics for anyone, but I guarantee you that once you have taken the steps to either create an estate plan or review your current one you will feel very satisfied having taken advanced care of your loved ones.

Anthony J. Medico, Esq., has practiced law for over 22 years. To ask a question for this column, or to receive Medico's free Estate Planning Survival Guide, visit his website at www.medicoandassociates.com, send an e-mail to Amedico@medicoandassociates.com or call (203) 661-8151. You can read most of his previous columns on his Greenwich Time estate planning blog on the internet. Just go to <http://www.greenwichtime.com/blogs> and scroll down until you find him under the business section. Enjoy.