



Nickels & Dimes

WELCOA'S ONLINE FINANCIAL BULLETIN

Build Your Emergency Fund

Emergency funds are necessary for financial security. They provide the funds you'll need to pay for expenses should something "unexpected" occur. Items that fall under the unexpected category include a loss of a job, disability, a large medical bill or a large bill for a home or auto repair.

3 Months & 6 Months

For singles, it's usually wise to have at least 3 months of living expenses saved in an emergency fund. For those with dependents, often 6 months of living expenses is recommended.

Accounts

Emergency funds are usually kept in savings or checking accounts. Check with your bank to find an account that pays the best interest and gives you the flexibility to withdraw funds when needed.

Home Equity

If you own a home, consider a home equity line of credit as a source of emergency funds. Since your home is collateral for any funds borrowed, make sure to use your home equity line of credit only for true emergencies.

Expect the Unexpected

Having an emergency fund will give you the cash you'll need to overcome unexpected expenses and provide you with invaluable peace of mind.



Plan a great Vacation

By Jeff Rubleski, MBA

The key to a great vacation comes down to one word: planning.

Whether you desire a vacation that is fast-paced or one that involves quiet and reflection, here are four major vacation decisions that will impact your vacation experience and the amount you'll spend on your vacation:

- 1. Transportation**—how will you travel to your vacation destination? If you drive, make sure your car is in good mechanical condition before your trip. If you choose to fly, use the Internet or a good travel agent to find the best deal on airfare. Make sure you check airfares from as many airports within "driving range" as possible. Driving a little extra to an alternative airport might save you a bundle.
- 2. Accommodations**—where will you stay? Sometimes spending more for lodging with kitchen facilities will more than offset the extra cost. Eating at restaurants for every meal can get expensive. Preparing some meals in your room can result in more healthful eating at a much lower cost than restaurant-prepared meals.
- 3. Food**—how much will you spend on food each day? Having a cooler or access to a refrigerator will help you to keep your food and beverage spending in check. If you are traveling with a family, consider lodging that includes a kitchen for meals and snacks.
- 4. Tours and Sightseeing**—are there special places you'll see on vacation? If so, check into the price for tickets and special transportation. Theme park tickets now average about \$50 per person per day! Also plan to spend money on souvenirs, especially if you are traveling with children or are planning to bring home gifts for family members or friends.

Properly planned vacations provide us with a break from our daily routines and can provide a lifetime of memories. With careful planning, you can have a great vacation that also fits within your budget.

