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as you are bouncing around trying to figure out what to do with yourself this week (assuming you are not on a real vacation!), here's a quick tech checklist to prepare for the coming season:

1. Check all of the printer cartridges and replace any that are low. Most modern printers have an online function you can use for that purpose. Also, check to make sure that you have a local source for low-cost cartridges, either new or re-filled, that has the cartridges you need in stock. If there is none (with a tip of the hat to our small-town firms!), keep the phone number for the nearest Staples handy.
2. If there are any wireless mice or keyboards in the office, replace their batteries.
3. Buy a spare wired mouse and keyboard, and keep them in the supplies closet. There is nothing more frustrating than have a work computer go down because the keyboard or mouse stopped working. Spares are cheap insurance.
4. Check all of the connectors of all computers and devices. Loose cables are an unnecessary risk.
5. Check to make sure that your software is up to date — virus definitions, the operating system, tax software, etc. On every machine.
6. Run a CD/DVD cleaning disk on each drive.
7. Back up everything at the end of the year. Put the backup disks or tapes, if you still use them, in a safe deposit box or storage site out of the office.
8. Run a virus sweep on every machine. If your anti-virus software does not have this capability, get a new program. In a pinch, Microsoft's free Security Essentials will do just fine.

9. If you've had the same Internet service for several years, you probably do not have

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Now all you have to do is sit back and wait for the crush of business.

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