By SHIRLEE IDEN

Two things no one can avoid are death and taxes.

If so, avoiding the legal professional comes in a close third.

Since taxes become increasingly complex, and dying without a will can be a costly error, more people than ever are requiring the services of an

ever are requiring the services of an attorney.

According to Don Lightfoot, president of Guardian Legal Services of Birmingham, there is a consumer trend toward group repeal degal programs around the country and in Michigan.

In 1971, the Supreme Court struck down the last bar association rules inhibiting the formation of prepaid legal plans. Since then, the number of persons covered has grown from virtually none to more than two million, according to the Newbouse News Service.

Last year, a prepaid legal service plan began operating for 140,000 Chrysler Corporation workers and retirees and prepaid legal service was a demand in recent automotive negotiar.

tions.
"Nationwide, prepaid legal service is no longer coming. — it's here," said Lawrence Wood, president of the American Prepaid Legal Services Institute. The group was formed by the American Bar Association as a clearinghouse for information.

SOUTHFIELD attorney Dennis Nystrom, a Southfield attorney who has represented insurance companies and railroads among others, says that up to now people waited for trouble to happen before obtaining legal help. "But it's important to know your attorney," he said. "Every individual should have a will, everyone now taxes each vear, and

"Every individual should have a will, everyone pays taxes each year, and participating in a real estate transaction has become nearly as inevitable as death and taxes.
"My parents lived in the home I grew up in for 29 years, but that's unusual. Today we have a mobile society. Almost everyone will buy or sell a home and need an attorney eventually."

ly."
Nystrom and his firm, Jenkins, Nystrom, Sterlacchi, plans to work with Guardian Legal Services to provide year-round legal services to groups and

year-round legal services to groups—individuals.

"The prepaid legal plans are coming wery fast," he said. "With a prepaid program people know they can call an attorney before making vital decisions and not waiting until theyre in trouble."

Nystrom said that in the past many such plans have failed. Most of them, he added, were quick answer approaches that more often than not only used the telephone.



Dennis Nystrom contends that prepaid legal services can be like putting a lawyer on retainer for every family. (Staff photo by Mindy Saunders)

"WE PLAN a more comprehensive approach with our senior people doing the initial interviews," he said. "We don't feel it would be fair to put rooki lawyers on those interviews." Nystrom said having prepaid legal services is like having a personal family attorney on retainer. "That's something only the wealthy and corporations had previously," he said.

Participants in the prepaid legal services offered by Nystrom's office will pay or have paid for them 856 odlars a year or \$1.25 per week.

"Starting off they will get two free hours of legal advice worth more than \$100, so they're shead of the game at the outset," Nystrom said.

Theoretically, that client could get the legal advice needed to complete his will and an uncomplicated no-fault divorce.
"Divorce, child custody and support

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