

Viruses, Parasites, Phishing & More

by: **Betty Hardin**

“Open the important attachment !!”

Isn't that enough enticement to make you click that advertisement or open the email or download the program that's going to help you to get rich quick ??? Unfortunately, for most people, it is. Very knowledgeable, intelligent people will click the button or download the program—and there isn't any amount of education, online warnings, or policies and procedures that will stop it. It's human nature.

Maybe it's the get rich quick thing—maybe it's thinking that you will miss something important. With a little common logic, a few inexpensive tools, and following simple rules that our mothers gave us, we can protect ourselves. BUT—we have to take the initiative to do it. Ironic, isn't it, that WE are our own worst enemy??

Don't open the door. Don't take candy from a stranger. Don't cross the road until you've looked both ways. Wear your coat—and your rubbers (those things you put on your feet) - when you go out into the cold.

We can help you help protect yourself and your system from unauthorized access. The steps that you take can also help you to ensure stability of your system, as well as protection of your data. Help yourself ...

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Get a firewall. There are several solutions available—a hardware solution is best because it doesn't load anything else on your computer. If you can't afford or use a hardware solution, there are several software solutions that do the job. Get an Anti-Virus Scanner. The most popular are McAfee®, Norton Anti-virus®, and Panda®, NOD32 and Kaspersky; (we like Nod32). Get a parasite blocker. Again, there are several to choose from; we like SPYBOT (see our Q&A section for more information). Set your browser to block 3rd party cookies. Test for vulnerabilities. Logon to Gibson Research and look for SHIELDS UP! to check your system for open ports. If you have a network with multiple users, establish an end user security policy and ensure your users are trained & understand it. If you have a wireless network, disable all external points of access. KEEP IT UP TO DATE

All of the latest versions of the Windows® Operating System include a “Windows Update” option. Use it to keep your operating system updated.

Several new viruses are released every day; make sure your anti-virus software is configured for daily updates. Don't let your anti-virus subscription expire. Anti-virus software is typically sold via subscription and needs to be updated annually.

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Support our Troops

Send a Soldier a Netbook

We, and several other local area businesses, are still running the Send a Soldier a Netbook program. Make a contribution online, or visit one of the many donation cans located at The Sand Bar Saloon, Holland Tire Center, Blue Goose Restaurant, the Fennville VFW, Pullman VFW and the Holland VFW. For more information call us at 866-399-7562.

Geek Speak

Malware - malicious software that includes viruses, worms, trojans, adware, spyware and spamware.

Everyone Loves TRIVIA

Microsoft is the largest producer of computer software for the personal computer.

COMMON SENSE

- DON'T open email from anyone that you don't know.
- DON'T open an email that tells you it has a fix for the latest virus—the anti-virus manufacturers don't send fixes via email - neither does Microsoft.
- DON'T reply to spam. DON'T unsubscribe from something you never subscribed to.
- DON'T send a MS-Office® document via email. They all store information that you might not want someone else to see. Send a plain text file instead.
- NEVER NEVER NEVER give your credit card or social security number to anyone who solicits you.
- DON'T Click on those pop-ups! The good guys don't use pop-ups—and there really isn't anything FREE.
- Consider using something besides Internet Explorer & Outlook Express.

RKMC Generous Donation

We would like to offer our thanks to the Road Knights Motorcycle Club. Over the course of the last couple months they have donated enough money to purchase four netbooks for the Send a Soldier a Netbook Program. Thanks to their generous donation we have been able to supply soldiers with the technology to communicate with their friends and family at home. Thank you RKMC and thank you to every soldier who fights for our freedom.



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