

## **Best PC Practice**

Surge protector or UPS (Uninterruptible Power Supply/Batt) on power supply cords.

Active Anti-Virus program, updated weekly. (updated not upgraded) Several good ones are available at reasonable cost.

Make sure all protective features are turned ON. Run a full system scan every 6 months. Don't let your subscription lapse.

If you are running Windows XP, the XP firewall should be turned on. Even dial up connections need a firewall these days.

If your system is other than XP you should have a firewall in place if you go to the internet.

High speed (internet) connections such as DSL, or Broadband Modems must have the firewall in place, and a router, between your modem and PC with a hardware firewall is better protection than a software firewall.

Windows must have critical/security patches applied from Microsoft, and most feel that the Service Pack 2 should be installed on XP (Home or Professional version) for security purposes. Critical/security updates are available post SP 2 from Microsoft Windows Update.

Go to <http://www.microsoft.com>, click on windows/Microsoft update, and follow the prompts.

An anti- "Spyware" program is essential these days. Spyware is added to your system from websites, without your knowledge. They can be extremely invasive, and can negatively affect your system or programs. Detect them and remove them at least every 1 – 2 weeks. Ad-Aware, Spy Sweeper, and SpyBot are good. Many others are available for around 30 bucks. You need to be proactive here as they do not update and run themselves.

Try to keep all documents in "My Documents", or a subdirectory of "My Documents".

Try to keep Pictures in "My Pictures" which is a subdirectory of "My Documents", or a subdirectory of "My Pictures".

Clean out old un-needed documents and pictures regularly.

Backup ALL IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS (directory of "My Documents") every 3 – 6 months to a separate disk or drive.

Remove unused programs through "add / remove programs" applet in the control panel, or by using their own "uninstall" program.

Delete "temporary internet files" and "cookies" at least every three months, depending on how much web surfing you do. The action to perform these maintenance tasks is found in the "internet options" dialogue box. Start/(settings) control panel/internet options (center box on General tab).

Maintenance items include: Scandisk, Chkdisk, or Disk Cleanup are maintenance items found in Windows. Start/programs/accessories/system tools (called one or the other in different versions of Windows). Run the above named disk checking programs at least every 6 months. May need to be done from SAFE MODE.

Then run the "Disk Defragmenter" tool to Defragment to files on the hard disk. Both items 13 and 14 can take some time, so it's smart to run these while having lunch, or taking a break. May need to be done from SAFE MODE.

To enter SAFE MODE, on start up press the F8 key before windows starts. Select SAFE MODE from the startup options.

(note if Windows starts normally then you didn't catch the F8 option in time, try again from shutdown or restart)

**Better yet, call Mike to do it for you....**

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