

Computer Security *why you should care*

Sick of spam in your email, popups on the Web, and adware on your computer? That's why computer security matters. These and other Internet scourges propagate via unprotected machines. Most home users think they are protected, yet lack the basic safeguards necessary for today's Internet access¹.

A properly secured machine will provide the user with greater performance and stability, as well as helping to stop the spread of Internet threats. And that makes us all more secure.

Why be concerned with security?

- Connecting to other machines/Internet renders yours vulnerable
- Increasing use of DSL and other always-on connectivity to the Internet
- Widespread availability of automated hacking tools (zombies)
- Access to personal, business data stored on your machine
- Possible legal liability if your machine is used to attack others
- Denial-of-service (DoS) attacks

A chair with four legs: the essentials for every PC

- Microsoft patches
- Antivirus software
- Antispyware software
- Firewall

Other ways to protect your systems

- **Choose good passwords and change them regularly!**
- Keep regular backups of your data
- Be cautious when opening unsolicited attachments or downloading software
- Be aware of the risks of file sharing and p2p services
- Beware of "social engineering" ploys to gain information

¹ National Cyber Security Alliance/AOL survey: http://www.staysafeonline.info/news/safety_study_v04.pdf