

Suggestions for handling inappropriate email

Just like we all receive unsolicited junk mail at home, we also tend to get unsolicited email. Sometimes that email can contain inappropriate text and/or images. This memo is intended to clarify this situation and offer some ideas to avoid any potential problems.

First, it is helpful to realize that you did not have to do anything wrong to begin receiving such email messages. The companies that send out such messages get their recipients by purchasing lists of email addresses or randomly generating them. Unfortunately, there is no way to totally prohibit this from happening. Just like you can get junk mail at home, there is no way to stop unscrupulous businesses from sending you email. However, here are some suggestions to help:

- **Do not access your email** while your computer is being shown **on your TV screen** or while **students are standing nearby**, in case something inappropriate would show up.
- If something inappropriate does show up, **simply delete the email message**.
- If you want, you can turn off the preview pane in Outlook Express so that your email message (and potentially offensive images) will not show automatically. Instead, you would have the listing of all your messages and would need to double-click on one to open and read it, or simply delete it if you do not want to open it. If you want to do this then open **Outlook Express**, click **“View”**, then click **“Layout”**, then uncheck **“Show preview pane”**.
- If the email offers a link to click on to remove you from their mailing list, **DO NOT click it**. The type of company that is sending you pornographic email, is not the type that will offer a removal option for you to click. On the contrary, they will actually send you more information now that they know the email address is real and in use.
- **Use discretion when giving out your email address** to web sites that ask. Many web sites will turn around and sell your address to these offending companies.
- Make sure **Sophos AntiVirus** is installed, updated, and running at all times (you should see the little lightening bolt or shield in the bottom right corner of your screen, next to the time). This will help protect you against viruses that may come in through email. If you are not sure about this, contact your building tech person.
- If you are still getting loads of unsolicited email, we can suggest a program called SpamFighter. It is free for personal use, so although as a district our tech staff is not able to install it for you, you are certainly able to do so on your own. The program can be downloaded from their website at:
<http://www.spamfighter.com>

If you have any questions, concerns, or comments, you can contact me by phone at 497-5600 extension 377, or by email at tech@northcanton.sparcc.org.

Thanks!

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