

## Keeping your computer up-to-date

In this issue of VikingTech we will be discussing how to keep your computer(s) up-to-date and running smoothly. Software and hardware developers are constantly releasing updates for computers to add new features and to fix bugs in earlier versions, especially security problems that could make your computer vulnerable to hackers and viruses.

It is very important to install these updates and patches to make sure your computer is safe and functioning properly. We have had MANY viruses infect computers in our district simply because the computers were not kept up-to-date. Below are instructions for keeping up on this process.

## Windows Updates



The most important updates you can do for your computer are Windows updates. These are free updates that are installed to your computer right from Microsoft's web site. You should do this at least once a month, or more frequently if you can.

**NOTE:** You must be using Microsoft's Internet Explorer to do Windows updates. You can not use Netscape. If you do not have Internet Explorer working on your computer, you need to contact your building tech support person to get switched from Netscape to IE.

## Scanning for Windows Updates

- 1) Start up Internet Explorer.
- 2) Click on "**Tools**" in the top menu bar.
- 3) Click on "**Windows Update**" in the drop down menu.
- 4) You will now be taken to Microsoft's update site. It may take a while to load, especially the first time you visit. If it asks you anything, always choose "**Yes**" or "**OK**" to proceed.
- 5) When the site is fully loaded, click on the "**Scan for updates**" link.
- 6) Microsoft will now scan your computer to see if you need any updates. This as well may take a few minutes.

## Results of the Windows Update scan

- 7) When the scan is done you will be told if you need any updates. There are three types of updates possible. They are:
  - a) **Critical Updates and Service Packs** – These are very important and must be installed. They will fix problem with Windows and protect your computer.
  - b) **Windows XP or Windows 98 updates** – These are not critical, but are useful. They often are updates that will add new helpful features to your computer, such as the latest version of Windows Media Player and such.
  - c) **Driver Updates** – These are not critical, but are helpful because they help the physical parts of your computer run better, such as providing the latest drivers for your video card, Internet card, and such.

## Installing Critical Windows Updates

- 8) If there are Critical Updates available, Microsoft will automatically choose them for you. You then need to click on the link that says "**Review and install updates**".
- 9) You will now be shown a list of all the critical updates that need to be installed. Simply click the "**Install Now**" button.
- 10) At this point the updates will be automatically downloaded and installed on your computer. If you are asked any questions, just click "**Yes**", "**OK**", or "**Next**" to continue.
- 11) When it is done, you may need to reboot your computer for the changes to take effect. After rebooting, you need to run through this process again to make sure there are no more updates needed.

## Installing other Windows Updates

- 12) Besides the Critical Updates, you can choose to install updates from the Windows XP, Windows 98, or Driver Updates sections. You have to pick these yourself however.
- 13) On the left side of the screen you will see a section titled "**Pick updates to install**". The number of available updates will be listed beside the categories.

Click on the category title to see a listing of the available updates.

- 14) If you see an update that you would like to install, click the **“Add”** button next to it.
- 15) When you have selected all the updates you want, click **“Review and install updates”**.
- 16) You will now be shown a list of all the updates you chose. Click the **“Install Now”** button to begin.
- 17) At this point the updates will be automatically downloaded and installed on your computer. If you are asked any questions, just click **“Yes”**, **“OK”**, or **“Next”** to continue.
- 18) When it is done, you may need to reboot your computer for the changes to take effect. After rebooting, you need to run through this process again to make sure there are no more updates needed.

### Handling Automatic Updates

Depending upon how your computer is set up, it may automatically check for Critical Updates from time to time without you even going to the update web site. If you are using your computer and a window pops up that says something about there being new Critical Updates available that need to be installed, please follow the instructions to install the updates. Do not cancel out of that message. These updates are very important to the safety and proper functioning of your computer.

### Norton Antivirus Updates

Another important thing to keep updated is your antivirus protection. Norton should be set up to automatically check for new virus protection info from time to time. However, it is still a good idea to check this yourself about once a week to make sure you are protected. New viruses are coming out all the time and can be very dangerous to your documents and programs.



- 1) Look in the bottom right corner of your screen, by the clock, and you should find a yellow shield. In Windows XP you may need to click the arrows to expand this tray area to show all the icons. The yellow shield is the Norton Antivirus icon. Double-click it to open Norton.
- 2) **NOTE:** If this yellow shield is not there, you may not have Norton installed and your computer would

not be protected against viruses. If so, contact your tech support person immediately to get Norton installed.

- 3) When the Norton window opens, look in the bottom right corner for the **“Live Update”** button. If it is grayed out, then our server is controlling your updates and you are OK.
- 4) If it is not grayed out, then look at the date next to it to see how recent your virus info is. It should not be older than one week.
- 5) If it is older than one week, then click the **“Live Update”** button.
- 6) Now click the **“Next”** button to let Norton search for and install any new updates.
- 7) When the updates are done installing you will have the latest protection against viruses.

### Updating Plug-ins

Finally you may want to check for any updates to your plug-ins. Plug-ins are small helper programs that allow your computer to access special types of files and do special things. These include the **Flash** and **Shockwave** players, which let you see interactive content on web sites, and the **Adobe Acrobat Reader**, which lets you open PDF files.



If you find that web sites are not loading properly, or if you are unable to open certain files, you may need to update some plug-ins.

- 1) Go to North Canton City Schools homepage at <http://www.northcanton.sparcc.org>
- 2) Put your mouse over the **“Technology”** link.
- 3) Click on **“Tutorials & Help Guides”**.
- 4) Scroll to the bottom of the page and click the link titled **“Viewers, Helpers, and Plug-ins Page”**.
- 5) At this page you can click on links to download the latest plug-ins. Follow the directions on the web sites that come up to do the update.

That does it for now. As always you can reach me:

By phone: **497-5600 x377**

By email: **tech@northcanton.sparcc.org**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Ciri Curtis'.