

Haul Revere Village

Millbury, Massachusetts

Viruses, Worms and Trojans

How are they different and why you should care...

You probably won't be able to listen to the news this week or read a paper that doesn't make some mention of the Conficker computer worm that was scheduled to go active on April 1st. Fortunately this worm's hype seems to be worse than its bite... let's hope it stays that way.

The following is a simple guide to some characteristics that are used to classify a nasty program as either a virus, worm or trojan. I've also included some links at the end of the article where you can get some additional information about Conficker and how to check to make sure your computer isn't infected.

A computer virus is a small program that attaches itself to a file on your computer. Usually viruses will be built to target executable programs meaning they will try to "infect" a file that you will run on your computer. When you run an infected program the code for the virus is run and does whatever the creator of the virus programmed it to do. Often, one of the first things a virus will do is try to infect other files, especially those being sent via an email or copied to removable media like a floppy disk (yeah, remember those) or a USB flash drive. This allows the virus an opportunity to infect

another computer if that infected email or removable media is opened on another computer. A virus can not propagate without human intervention. If you don't run the infected file it will just sit there forever...doing absolutely nothing.

Now worms by comparison are "smart" as they can spread and perform events without the need for human action. A worm will usually try to replicate itself on the infected computer while attempting to find any path to infect other computers. Worms can spread over the internet itself, but fortunately most are stopped by firewalls that either an Internet Service Provider (ISP) maintains, those built into your own hardware (NAT firewall on a router) or the software (Windows Firewall) on your computer.

A Trojan or Trojan horse can be thought of as an unexpected gift, just like the huge wooden horse that the Greeks used to gain entry to the city of Troy. That Trojan horse contained Greek soldiers, the modern version contains a malicious program. One example of a Trojan horse could be a game that you download from the internet. You may be looking forward to playing the new game, but unknown to you the game

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Dates of Note:

- Easter Sunday - Apr 12
- Income Taxes Due - Apr 15
- Earth Day - Apr 22
- Arbor Day - Apr 24



Recycling for Apr:

- Paper - Apr 1, 15, 29
- Recyclables - Apr 8, 22



Don't forget that Tax Day is on April 15th.

VIRUSES, WORMS AND TROJANS (FROM PAGE 1)

contains a Trojan and also runs doing whatever the designer programmed it to do.

Elaborate Trojans can be fully functional programs with only a small, but important bit of the program being the malicious code. Simple Trojans are just empty shells that do nothing other than run the nasty Trojan program. Think of a trojan file named as funnymovie.wmv.exe. Earlier versions of Windows would report this as a movie file (.wmv) even though the actual file is an executable file (.exe) that could have unwanted results. That is why security experts always warn people not to run files from untrusted sources.

In the early days, creators of malicious programs like viruses, worms and Trojans would program their creation to simply spread and display a gotcha message in order to gain notoriety for their “hacking” skills. Later, some authors did obviously malicious things like deleting files from infected hard drives.

Now most writers of malicious programs are out to leverage their control of infected computers in order to make money. Often this entails infecting as many computers as possible with malicious code that allows the creator to control of these computers and use them to send SPAM email messages. You know all those ads for Viagra, stock tips or ways make quick money at home that you get by email? They most likely were sent by a computer that was infected by a virus, worm or trojan.

Computers that are under remote control like this are called ‘bots’. Some malicious code can infect tens of thousands of computer creating a huge ‘bot net’ that the author of the nasty code can use as he sees fit. If your computer is infected it can be working hard under your nose sending out

hundreds or thousands of SPAM messages each day. Does your computer suddenly seem slower or is your internet connection not as fast as it once was? Maybe your computer is a ‘bot’ working hard to make someone else rich.

What can you do as a computer user to avoid becoming a victim? Here are a few basic tips to follow:

- Only open and run files from trusted sources.
- Use a router that contains NAT firmware to keep your internet ports protected.
- Turn off any computer services such as ftp (file transfer protocol) that you do not need.
- Use an anti-virus program and keep the virus signatures (usually via a yearly subscription) up to date.
- If you have a software firewall available turn it on.
- Password protect your computer and use a secure password (do not use dictionary words).
- Protect your computer data by creating and maintaining good backups.

If your computer is infected there are some anti-virus programs or software that can be used to try to remove the malicious code from the computer. However, not all anti-virus programs can detect and remove all infections so many security experts say that the only way to be sure that your computer is clean after being infected is to reformat the hard drive and reinstall the operating system and programs. That is why it is critical to maintain good backups of your data.

US Computer Emergency Response Team:
<http://www.us-cert.gov/index.html>

Microsoft - Information about the Conficker Worm
<http://www.microsoft.com/protect/computer/viruses/worms/conficker.msp>

PC Magazine - The Best Security Suites for 2009
<http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,2817,2333448,00.asp>

ALLERGIES

It's Spring. The days are getting longer and the air is getting warmer. The air fills up with pollen and other allergens as the flowers bloom. For many people, suffering with seasonal allergies, that means hay-fever misery.

There are several over-the-counter and prescription drug remedies that may or may not work, and here are a few ways to limit allergies.

SIMPLE WAYS TO LIMIT ALLERGIES

- Allergy symptoms send millions of people to doctors' offices each year and cost U.S. companies more than \$250 million for increased absenteeism and reduced productivity.
- Some tips for limiting symptoms caused by tree pollen and, later this spring, pollens from grasses and weeds.
- Close windows at night and car windows while traveling.
- Limit outdoor activity when pollen counts are highest (between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.),

humidity is high or it's windy. The lightest pollen grains can travel up to 400 miles.

- Shower before you go to sleep so you don't bring pollen into bed. If you have a pet, wipe down its fur when it comes in for the evening.
- Take medications prescribed by your doctor regularly and at the recommended dosage. Doctors say steroid nasal sprays bring the most relief for many people. If symptoms worsen or change, consult your doctor.

For people who are also allergic to molds:

- Don't over-water indoor plants; limit their number.
- Don't mow lawns.
- Don't hang sheets or clothing outside to dry.

Source: AP

2009 is Fireplace Inspection Year!

**ALL fireplaces must be inspected and cleaned
(if necessary)
between April 1 and October 1**

A certificate of inspection from a licensed chimney sweep must be submitted to the Board no later than October 1, 2009. Most of our unit owners use Top Hat in Grafton. For details on a discount Top Hat is offering PRVA, call (508) 839-9997 . Fireplace cleaning and inspection is a safety issue that concerns ALL of us at PRVA.

Homeowners and tenants are reminded that our fireplaces are NOT made to withstand continual, hot, wood fires and are NOT to be used as a primary source of heat for your unit.

Spring PRVA Yard Sale

Saturday June 6

(Rain date Sunday June 7th)

Set up 7am-9am at the front entrance
Yard Sale 9am-noon

If you are interested in setting up a table, please email
Board@PaulRevereVillage.com

We will have a **FREE** Trash Pickup Day
Monday June 8 following the Yard Sale-
ANY items (furniture, paint, computers, tvs) can be
disposed of at NO additional cost to you!
There will be a small dumpster at the water shed for metal items
and a larger dumpster for general items.



DEVILED EGGS

Easter is right around the corner. Here is a recipe to help you with all of those leftover colored Easter eggs.

Ingredients

- 6 hard cooked eggs
- 1/2 tsp. dry mustard
- 1/4 tsp. ground pepper
- 3 Tbsp. mayonnaise

Directions

Cut peeled eggs lengthwise. Slip out the yolks into a bowl. Mash the yolks with a fork. Mix in salt, mustard, pepper and mayonnaise. Fill the egg whites. Sprinkle with a small bit of paprika.

Shop around for a pretty deviled egg dish to serve them in.

MONTHLY MINUTE WITH MAUREEN

I noticed the first hyacinth emerging from the still cold soil out in the front of our house today. We will be seeing the daffodils blooming soon enough. The driveways will be all cleaned up. Before we know it, the lawns will be mowed weekly. The children are already playing outside on the days when the sun is not hidden by clouds. It all reminds me that there is hope. Some things never change despite the current state of the economy, the fear of unemployment, the need for affordable healthcare for every American, and so many other really big issues.

There is always the hope of another day and another season. Celebrate Spring and the rebirth.

~ Maureen



Goodbye Winter...

