

Computer Bits by Mark Eggert of Raad One Network Solutions, Inc.

Welcome to Computer Bits, a series of articles on computers and network information. Because of the increasing concern for keeping your computers secure, I'll spend the next two articles on security.

Welcome to Part 2. The February 22, 2005 issue of PC Magazine had an article on security titled "a false sense of security" by Ben Z. Gottesman and Konstantinos Karagiannis which I used as a reference for this article.

They recommend, and I agree with, using intelligent tools and the following sensible extra steps continued for Part 1:

5. **Beware ActiveX.** ActiveX controls execute cool interactive elements on Web pages, but they provide access to the local Windows OS – highly risky. You can control how ActiveX controls work in browser in the security settings.
6. **Know what you're running.** If the kids insist on using P2P applications, use ones without spyware, such as Shareazza, and don't share the entire hard drive. Also, look through the Program Files directory – you may be surprised what's on your machine.
7. **Avoid foreign objects.** Your kid's friend could show up with a CD or USB key with a downloaded game on it and inadvertently install spyware on your system. Or he or she could do so on purpose.
8. **Keep Windows patched.** Critical security updates are just that – critical. Set Windows to check for updates and install them automatically.
9. **Prepare for the worst.** Store sensitive data off your hard drive, preferably encrypted. Invest in system-recovery software against the day Windows becomes a total loss, either from hackers or from bit rot and Registry bloat.

The article goes on to discuss and rate two types of security applications. The top picks in each category are:

**Security Suite:** ZoneAlarm Security Suite 5.5 – This is due to its strong personal firewall.

**Antispyware:** Spy Sweeper 3.5 – One product that they mentioned but would not rate is the Microsoft Antispyware program because it is still in beta. When this program was offered by Giant Software before Microsoft bought them, it was rated the best. Since the heart of the program hasn't changed, I would recommend it.

April 3<sup>rd</sup> was the fifth anniversary for my business and as a Group Buying Partner. Therefore, I'm having an extra special on my flyer in the Spring Group Buying Partner mailing that was sent out in the middle of April.

If you have a computer or network question you'd like answered and you think others would like to know the answer too, please forward them to me. My email address is [meggert@wi.rr.com](mailto:meggert@wi.rr.com), my phone number is 262-679-7704 and my fax number is 262-679-7664.