

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

Welcome to Computer Bits, a series of articles on computers and network information. This is another article with Questions & Answers. This month's question is a very good one and it's very important to understand what it means to your computers and business. The question is: **Lately, I've been hearing a lot about Microsoft's Security Initiative. What's it all about and why should I be concerned?**

Last fall Microsoft realized what kind of world we live in as we all did and decided to do something about it with their products. This is an important step because Microsoft Windows is the operating system on about 85% of all computers and about 70% of all servers. For the last three months of last year Microsoft looked at the security of it's products and tried to inform the users that they need to see how secure their systems were. This first initiative was followed by a second that took the first three months of this year to produce the necessary patches to get their products secure. They have included all of these patches on the Windows Updates website. Of course, as new security holes are found, new patches are made available to patch them.

So what does this mean to you? If you have computers that connect to the internet, you need to visit the Windows Update website and download and install these patches. Now Microsoft has made this easy. All you have to do once you're connected to the internet is click on Windows Update in the Windows Start Menu. This will take you to the website where you will be able to start a function which checks to see what patches and updates are on your computer. You will then be given a list of updates that are available for your computer. It's important to install the ones in the Critical category. If you haven't done this before it may take awhile to download and install the updates. I would further recommend that you check at least once a month for new updates. Besides the Critical Updates there are other updates that will help your computer run better and you may want to get some of those updates too. It's great that Microsoft has taken this stance but it's up to us to get the updates to keep our computers as secure as possible.

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, my phone number is 262-679-7704 and my fax number is 262-679-7664.