

# Organizing And Protecting Your Personal Files

by Emil Volcheck, MLCUG, March 11, 2006

**The files I'm considering are any that you, as a computer user, have created.**

**Such files, if not properly archived are unlikely to be retrievable or reproducible.**

**The approach can pretty much be spelled out in one sentence:**

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**Make sure that any files which you create - using any application - are stored in the "My Documents" folder,**

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**or a sub-folder in the My Documents folder.**

**This will require you to PERSUADE your programs to put the files you create with them in a position they may NOT naturally do!**

**Remember that YOU are the master of your information and those applications will just have to bow to your will.**

## **START BY ASKING YOURSELF:**

**1) - what programs do I use, or have I used, to produce data files (these might be letters, posters, papers, homework, you name it).**

**2) - do these programs normally store your file in the "My Documents" folder?**

**If not, what must I do to make that happen?**

**With that behind us, do YOU have questions or concerns about any specific application that you use on your computer - that produces information files that are preserved?**

**If so, let's raise them Right Now !!!**

**Preparation for**

**Full Backups,**

**Major Installations,**

**New Hard Drive**

# **FIRST STEP IS A GOOD CLEANUP/SLIM DOWN:**

## **for all Windows versions:**

- uninstall unneeded or unwanted programs
- delete as many temp files as possible:
  - C:\TEMP,
  - C:\WUTEMP
  - C:\WINDOWS\TEMP,

## **for XP/Me**

- C:\DOCUMENTS AND SETTINGS  
\your account\LOCAL SETTINGS  
\TEMP\)

**NOTE: DO NOT DELETE ITEMS FROM  
TODAY OR THE LAST FEW DAYS**

**NEXT:**

- delete Windows Update uninstall folders
  - in C:\Windows
- delete cookies & temporary internet files
  - in Internet Explorer
- or cookies & cache files
  - in Mozilla (Firefox or Netscape)

**NOW EMPTY THE  
RECYCLE BIN!**

# **YOUR SECOND STEP IS THE SECURITY CLEANUP:**

- **update your anti-spyware app(s)**
  - **do a complete system scan**
- **update your anti-virus app**
  - **do a complete system scan**
  - **if you use Norton Anti-virus, be sure to first run a full "*Live Update*", NOT just a regular update, before scanning**
- **run check disk, on your C drive (at least),**
  - **set it to fix any errors**
- **run defrag on your C drive (at least)**

# **NOW YOU'RE READY TO DO YOUR JOB(S)!**

## **Example 1:**

- make a COMPLETE system backup
  - store a copy on an external medium for safety**
  - if you can't do a complete backup, then be sure to, at least, thoroughly backup ALL THE FILES THAT YOU HAVE CREATED****

## **Example 2:**

- perform that major installation (like re-installing Windows)**



### **Example 3:**

**- install that new replacement hard drive:**

**- unplug your internet connection  
(modem OR broadband)**

**- install the new HD - set to be SLAVE**

**- run your cloning software to copy  
the old drive to the new**

**e.g. with True Image, Ghost,  
Drive Image, etc.**

**- now replace the old HD, with the new**

**make sure the new HD is now  
set to MASTER**

## Example 3A (if you have USB 2.0 ports):

- unplug your internet connection (modem OR broadband)
- set NEW HD to MASTER
- connect via a USB->IDE adapter
- run your cloning software to copy old drive to new
- now replace the old HD, with the new

***QUESTIONS??***

# ***Backup Utilities***

**Your own batch file - free**

**Karen's Replicator - free**

**Microsoft Backup - free**

**Acronis True Image 9 - \$34**