



The Pervasive nature of “Spyware” and “Adware”.

When you bring your PC to us and we deem it has been infiltrated with “spyware” or other malicious code or programs we will purge them from your computer, and once all tasks are completed we will call you to come pick it up. **Now here’s what you need to know:**

- Most “spyware” is not illegal (we know...it probably should be).
- “Spyware” can start showing up on your computer as soon as the next time you log on and sometimes there is little that can be done to prevent that, due to the nature of the Internet.
- **You need to protect your computer by:**
 1. *Running our suggested “spyware” removal software often and keeping it updated.*
 2. *Not surfing sites that might be questionable and not clicking on pop-ups.*
 3. *Not downloading software that is questionable.*
 4. *Keeping your antivirus software current and updated.*
 5. In our opinion, it is a very good idea to keep a “firewall” updated and running at all times when connected to the internet. (Don’t know what a “firewall” is, see the definitions below.)

It would be easy to think that after having it in the shop two weeks ago and finding similar problems, that, well, those darn techies didn’t do the job correctly. In this case please consider if you’ve protected your computer by taking the previous suggestions we’ve offered here. If not, what happened is that you’ve probably acquired “spyware” again.

Definitions:

Spyware:

In a nut shell “spyware” is code that covertly gathers user information and activity without the user’s knowledge. Spy software can record your keystrokes as you type them, passwords, credit card numbers, sensitive information, where you surf, chat logs, and can even take random screenshots of your activity. It can also significantly slow your ability to surf the internet by consuming bandwidth.



Adware:

“Adware” goes beyond the reasonable advertising that is expected from **Freeware* or **Shareware* and can cause many problems. Typically Adware is a separate program that accompanies a shareware or similar type program. “Adware” will usually continue to generate advertising even when the user is not running the originally desired program.

Firewall:

Hardware or Software that secures computer files by blocking unwanted access. We recommend a “Hardware Firewall”.

Suggested software:

- Spybot is the tool we use to remove “spyware” (if you choose to use this utility to remove “spyware”, **we suggest you back-up your registry prior to making any changes** or deleting anything). It can be downloaded at :
<http://www.safer-networking.org>.
- Adaware is the tool we use to more specifically remove “adware” (if you choose to use this utility to remove “spyware”, **we suggest you back-up your registry prior to making any changes** or deleting anything). It can be downloaded at
<http://www.lavasoftusa.com>.
- We also use suggest a firewall. In order of best to lesser quality, consider a “Netgear” (hardware) router. Next consider “Zonealarm” firewall at <http://www.zonelabs.com>(there is a free version), and lastly, at least turn on your “Windows” firewall if you have one.
- As far as antivirus software goes, there are many out there. We use and recommend Symantec at <http://www.symantec.com>.
The bottom line is, find one that works, and keep it updated and running.

* Freeware is a program offered free of charge.

* Shareware is a program offered often with a trial use, but ultimately with a charge.