



IN BRIEF

MALPRACTICE AVOIDANCE NEWSLETTER FOR OREGON LAWYERS

Issue No. 81

JULY 2000

VIRUS CONTROL TIPS

If you are hit by a virus or are trying to avoid one, you may want to explore these web sites. CERT (Computer Emergency Response Team) Coordination Center, www.cert.org, provides incident response services to sites that have been the victims of attack, and publishes a variety of security alerts. IBM's "Anti-virus Online" site, www.av.ibm.com, has information on viruses, hoaxes, and how to respond to them. This site's "Hype Alerts" and "Virus Alerts" may provide information on whether a bizarre message you received is real. Here are some virus prevention tips from some experts:

- Make sure your anti-virus software includes visual basis script (.vbs) files when scanning.
- Do not open attachments or download files from unknown sources.
- Be sure that your macro virus protection feature in Microsoft products is selected.
- Do not open attachments or download files *even from sources that you know* if the text sending the attachment or file looks unusual or suspicious. (Several of the recently circulated viruses targeted Microsoft products, particularly Outlook. These viruses were able to enter a person's "contacts" program and begin sending e-mails to everyone listed on the database. Examples include the Melissa and the "I Love You" viruses.)
- Never download an executable (".exe") file from an untrusted source.
- Do not open e-mail attachments that contain executable (".exe") files or visual basis script (".vbs") files.
- Make sure your computer boots first from C, then A, to minimize boot sector viruses.
- Backup often so that you can restore your files if your computer is infected.
- If you use Microsoft products, investigate and install the security patches offered for Outlook and follow Microsoft's advice on security settings and practices.
- If you use Microsoft Word, be certain that you maintain the recommended security settings for both e-mail and word processing.
- Install anti-virus software and keep it updated.

This article was adapted from an article that originally appeared in the ABA General Practice, Solo and Small Firm Section newsletter, SOLO, Vol. 6, No. 3, Spring 1999. Our thanks to the original author and SOLO editor-in-chief, Robin Page West; Winfred Fong, www.ebs-us.com, Enterprise Business Solutions, Inc.; and to Tom Cave and Beverly Michaelis of the Oregon State Bar Professional Liability Fund for their contributions to this article.

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