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MSA Computer Support Newsletter

January 2007

Email all questions and comments to: MSA-Helpdesk@ars.usda.gov

Time for the Annual Clean-A-Fest

Should old acquaintance be forgot? . . . Over the course of a year many computer acquaintances can be forgotten. Or dropped. Or misplaced. Or whatever. Creating an annual checklist to keep your Windows system lean, mean, and clean is a good idea:

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Clean-A-Fest
- 2 Trim Your Mailbox Size
- 3 Agency News
- 4 USDA's Linc Pass

- Review all data files on your computer and delete as necessary: Perhaps the biggest annual task is doing a comprehensive review of the data files on your computer. Look at each and every file and delete those you think you will no longer need.
- Review your Web browser's favorites list and delete items you don't use anymore. Chances are good that what you considered your favorites a year ago no longer qualify as such. Keeping your favorites list pared down helps you find what you need faster.
- Visit manufacturers' Web sites to check for updates: Take some time to visit the Web sites for the manufacturers of your system hardware. Check for new drivers for printers, scanners, cameras, and so on, that have been released during the previous 12 months. Updating your drivers can improve speed and reliability.
- Update your program inventory: Work habits change; tools come and go. You need to make sure that your Windows system always reflects the way you currently use your computer. Go ahead and remove any programs you no longer use.
- Free up wasted disk space: A good way to find wasted disk space is to use the Disk Cleanup tool in Win XP. The Disk Cleanup tool helps you free up space on your hard disk by searching your disk for files that you can safely delete.
- Defrag your computer: I hate newspaper articles that start on the front page but continue somewhere in the middle of the newspaper. I could get through the article much faster if it was printed on consecutive pages like a magazine article. Files on your computer can either be fragmented like a newspaper, or unfragmented like a magazine. Over time, more and more files become fragmented. When a file is fragmented, it takes longer for the computer to read because it has to skip to different sections of the hard disk.



4 Fast Ways to Trim the Size of Your Mailbox

Tip 1: Look for the largest messages first and delete them

To group your e-mail messages by size:

1. On the *View* menu point to *Display Settings > Sort*.
2. In the Sort window select *size*.

Delete large messages first (or save the attachments elsewhere, see Tip 3 below) to make the greatest difference to your overall mailbox size.

Tip 2: Empty your Trash folder

Every time you delete an e-mail message, it goes into the Trash folder. You must regularly empty this folder; otherwise it will continue to utilize your GroupWise quota. Please note once items are deleted from the Trash folder they will not be recoverable.

To empty your Trash folder:

1. Right click on the *Trash* folder.
2. Select *Empty Trash*.

To delete these messages automatically, use the Empty the Trash folder automatically after X days setting. If you are squeamish about deleting a file and having it gone forever, you might want to skip this setting.

To use the Empty the Trash folder automatically after X days setting:

1. On the *Tools* menu click *Options*.
2. In the Options box, double click *Environment*.
3. In the Environment window, click on the *Cleanup* tab.
4. In the Empty trash section, select the *Automatic after* option and change the *days* to something like 7, 14 or 30.
5. Click *OK*.

Tip 3: Save attachments outside your mailbox

E-mail attachments are often the cause of a large mailbox. Attachments take up lots of space. When you receive an attachment that you want to keep, it's generally a good idea to save the attachment to your harddrive and delete the email. To do this, right click the attachment and select *Save As*.

Tip 4: Archive when possible

Generally, a copy of each message you send is stored in your Sent Items folder. It's easy to forget about this, and over time, you may end up with a huge Sent Items folder. Since you probably don't need to track each and every item you send, you can either delete these messages or archive them.

To archive a message:

1. Select the message(s) to archive
2. On the *Action* menu, click *Archive*

Did You Know That Autoreplies encourage spammers?

ANY reply sent to a spammer, whether automated or not, can only serve to encourage more spam. At the very least, a reply confirms the validity of a your email address.



How to Enable Pop-up Blockers

Get steps [here](#) on how to enable “popular” pop-up blockers

SharePoint Contacts

Auburn AL – Betty Shepherd

Baton Rouge LA – Gail Champagne

Bowling Green KY – Jason Simmons

Jackson TN – Lisa Fritz

Lexington KY – Gary Schaeffer

MS State MS – Gary Burrell

Oxford MS – Tyrone Swearingen

Poplarville MS – Susan Herrin

SRRC – Hans Wientjes

Stoneville – Kathi Tullos

AgLearn Update

- Printed Certificates will no longer be accepted as confirmation of AgLearn completion of training.
- Before you begin an AgLearn training session, always click on the “check my computer settings” to ensure that your computer is properly configured for AgLearn sessions.
- Technical help for AgLearn (and E-authentication) issues may be found at <http://msa.ars.usda.gov/computerhelp>

SharePoint Survey

SharePoint is one year old - give us your feedback.

The SharePoint software was implemented for ARS in October 2005. ARS has over 1000 active SharePoint sites, 5000 active users, and 1000 non-ARS user accounts. Please complete a survey to provide your feedback on your experience with SharePoint. The survey results will be used in developing plans for improving the configuration of and training for SharePoint.

The survey can be found at <https://arsnet.usda.gov/sites/ARS/SPADMIN/Lists/SharePoint/overview.aspx> then select “respond to survey.” (Note: For assistance to access the site, contact your local SharePoint contact.)

Thank you in advance for your time and helpful thoughts.
Greg Wilson, ARS SharePoint Coordinator.



HSPD-12 60-Second NEWSFLASH #4

Subject: HSPD-12 “How has USDA prepared for October 27th?”

In August 2004, President George W. Bush issued Homeland Security Presidential Directive 12, commonly referred to as **HSPD-12**. This directive called for establishment of a common identification standard for all Federal employees and contractors. The most visible result of this directive is a **new common identification card** for the Federal government, known as the Personal Identity Verification (PIV) card. USDA has branded its **PIV card** as the “**LincPass**”, in honor of President Abraham Lincoln, founder of the Department of Agriculture.

The technology and infrastructure required to produce and manage the PIV card is considerable. Several large Federal agencies banded together in early 2006 and agreed to develop a Shared Service Solution (SSS), whereby interested agencies could sign up and be covered by one service, and realize significant HSPD-12 implementation cost savings compared with the expense of building and supporting the technology infrastructure individually.

USDA has recently signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the General Services Administration (GSA) to participate in its HSPD-12 Shared Service Solution. This allows GSA to produce the **LincPass** for USDA.

What’s Happening Now?

GSA will be opening four initial enrollment stations a few weeks prior to the HSPD-12 compliance deadline, October 27 2006. The enrollment stations in New York, Seattle, Atlanta, and Washington DC will print and issue one card per participating Department, including USDA, to ensure HSPD-12 compliance on October 27

A small number of USDA officials will receive USDA’s first LincPasses on or before October 27 . Additional USDA participants will also be enrolling in the new system during the next few weeks. By November, we expect to have as many as 30 USDA employees in possession of a LincPass.

What’s Happening Next?

Following October 27 USDA will continue to work with GSA in enrolling employees, and will also embark on USDA-wide deployment planning. Rollout to the USDA employees, contractors and affiliates is expected to begin January 2007 and will be phased in by organization and geographic location. By October 2008, all USDA employees and contractors who need to receive a LincPass should be enrolled in the system. All new employees and contractors will also be expected to follow the new credentialing processes and procedures by this date.

Agency HSPD-12 Leads will be crucial participants in the planning and deployment processes. We plan to host a session in January to share USDA policies and discuss deployment planning. Additional items over the next few months include:

- Finalization of USDA Policy and Procedure for LincPass qualifications and issuance;
- Training for HSPD-12 roles including Sponsor, Adjudicator, Security Officer and Role Administrator;
- Training for USDA personnel in recognizing and accepting the LincPass for building and facility access; and
- Planning for integration of LincPass with USDA’s building and IT systems access controls.



For more detailed information visit <http://lincpass.usda.gov>. You will need to **login** with your **eAuthentication Level Two** User ID and password to access the full details regarding implementation of HSPD-12 at USDA. To confirm eAuthentication access level and account information, visit <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov>