

Privacy Tip #194 - NSA Issues Alert to Microsoft Windows Users

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Many individuals and not-for-profit organizations, including those in the health care industry, believe that they do not have the resources to update to the newest versions of software. However, the newest versions are introduced by manufacturers to patch older versions that have known security flaws and vulnerabilities.

Microsoft Windows users have been warned repeatedly over the past several years to update to newer versions because of known security vulnerabilities that put the software and data behind it at risk. Unfortunately, some of those users have not done so, and attacks have crippled them, possibly including a recent one in Baltimore.

The widespread problem of the use of older versions of Windows has become so extreme that the National Security Agency (NSA) recently issued an advisory again telling Windows users that older versions contain a flaw known as “Bluekeep,” which could subject the user to a cyber-attack. The vulnerability makes computers susceptible to viruses and ransomware. It could even allow the attackers to remotely gain complete control of the system.

The fact that the NSA has issued this advisory shows how serious it is and how devastating it can be to individuals and companies. Now is the time to upgrade to newer versions of Windows to avoid becoming a victim.

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