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## MAY MEETINGS

**OPEN's monthly meeting for May will be held on Wednesday the 7th at 1:00 pm**  
**New members of the club are invited to attend as we are always looking for new ideas and feedback on how the club is performing.**

**The next Launceston Computer Group (LCG) meeting will be at 7:15 pm on Wednesday JUNE 4th**

### Newstream Articles

Deadline : 10 Days before Meeting

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**Single \$20, Family \$30 (Includes Email edition Newstream)**

**Printed & Posted Newsletter \$20 extra**

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## **LCG Committee 2014/15**

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**Vice President: Ivan Turmine**

**Secretary: Iris Meek**

**Treasurer: Dennis Murray**

**Ass. Treasurer: Laraine Rist**

**PC Librarian: Vacant**

**Mac Librarian: Vacant**

**Newstream Editor: Ron Baker**

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**"V.I.C.T.O.R." Co-Ordinator: Robert Tierney**

**LCG Committee: Glenn Gilpin, Reinhard von Samorzewski, Eleanor Horder, Bruce**

**Dineen**

## **OPEN Committee 2014/15**

**O.P.E.N. Co-ordinator: Robert Tierney.**

Responsible for the smooth running of the Centre on a daily basis

**O.P.E.N. Chairperson: Laraine Rist.**

Chair all meetings of OPEN and ensure that they run smoothly

**O.P.E.N. Vice Chairperson: Robert Tierney.**

Chair meeting when the Chairperson is unavailable.

**O.P.E.N. Minute Secretary: Heather Loffel.**

Handles all incoming and outgoing communications

Responsible for the documentation and distribution of all meeting minutes

**Treasurer: Dennis Murray.**

Responsible for all monies and banking

**Assistant Treasurer: Laraine Rist.**

Help the Treasurer where necessary.

**Newsletter Editor: Dennis Murray.**

**Publicity Officer: Iris Meek.**

Responsible for all advertising

**Membership Co-ordinator: Eleanor Horder.**

Keep Membership database up to date.

**Co-ordinator O-learn: Eleanor Horder**

**Tutor Co-ordinator: Laraine Rist, Robert Tierney & Dennis Murray.**

Keep regular contact with Tutors to bring ideas and concerns to meetings

**Maintenance Co-ordinators: Dennis Murray.**

Responsible for the maintenance and repairs to all computer equipment

**"V.I.C.T.O.R." Co-ordinator: Robert Tierney.**

**Webmaster/Content: Tom Olsen. <<mailto:webmaster@lcg.org.au>>**

**OPEN Committee: Janet Headlam, Karia Wicks, Sandra Viney, Kay Dawson.**

## OPEN NEWSLETTER – MAY 2014

### FROM THE ASSISTANT EDITOR A FEW CHANGES FOR MAY and JUNE

Hello everyone!

I'm hoping that "Newstream" the official newsletter for OPEN and the Launceston Computer Group will be available on the club's web-site as usual.

However, as many of you will already know our Webmaster is travelling overseas and we aren't entirely sure that he will be able to upload the newsletter to the 'Net from his remote location—wherever that may be!

If you hear one of your fellow members being concerned that they haven't seen the May newsletter please direct them to one of the tutors so that they can obtain a copy at the club.

Due to a communication problem the **Computer Maintenance session** scheduled for April 23rd did not take place—this had now been re-scheduled to the afternoon of June 18th.

At this stage we still don't have a replacement tutor for our Android tablet sessions so the class originally scheduled for the **afternoon of May 21st has been cancelled**. Rob Tierney will conduct a replacement session which will be the **second instalment of PowerPoint**.

**On Friday May 16th a Tutors' Meeting will be held.** It is hoped that in addition to the normal agenda we will be able to have a short presentation on a subject that will enable the tutors to provide additional guidance to student members as they navigate their way along the information super-highway.  
**Dennis Murray**

\*\*\*\*\*  
★ **VICTOR PHONE NUMBER 0408 174 235**

★ **Contact the Coordinator Rob Tierney for assistance with computer problems at home (Bookings are subject to availability of tutors.)**

\*\*\*\*\*

### VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION

Recently I received an invitation to attend a Volunteering Week function from one of the other places where I contribute some of my time.

I considered the roles of some of the people who give their time at those locations ... the ladies who prepare the meals and do the washing-up at the Hadspen and Westbury Day Centres, the bus-drivers who need to obtain a PV licence so that they can safely transport Day Centre clients to and from the sites, the attendants who ride on the buses to assist clients with special needs and the skilled volunteers who operate the men's sheds ... and so on.

While all volunteer contributions are valuable my mind turned to our special volunteers at OPEN who operate in a very challenging environment. As one of our founding members once commented people in their 60s, 70s and 80s are 'digital immigrants' - for most of them the world of computers was not part of their education and yet at OPEN we have many of those people now providing computer tuition and guidance to new members.

In the rapidly changing world of technology it is not easy to keep up with all the changes so to those of you who are 'student members' please be patient. It can often take quite time for your tutors to obtain the knowledge and information needed to answer some of your queries.

In some cases their level of experience may not be much greater than yours ... for instance, consider the area of tablet computing where iPads and Androids have only been available for two or three years.

We also need to think about the volunteering efforts that go on behind the scenes ... the 'ingredients' for your morning or afternoon tea, the stationery that you use to print your letters or works of art, and supplies for the 'convenience' all have to be purchased by someone.

And of course we can't operate without finances so those who count up the money each day and do our banking are essential contributors to our operations.  
**Dennis**

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### VENUE TELEPHONE NUMBER

The club telephone is available during class hours.

\*\*\*\*\* **6343 4928** \*\*\*\*\*

Members and tutors can be contacted at the clubrooms **during class hours** by telephoning the number shown above.

Monday to Friday 10am – 3pm

Tuesday evenings 7pm—9 pm

### CD AND DVD LABEL PRINTING ADVICE

One of the unforeseen side effects of setting up our Canon IP4850 as a network printer is that it fails to display the instructions that we have become accustomed to when printing CD and DVD labels directly on to disks.

We now have a second Canon IP4850 that can be used exclusively for CD and DVD label printing.

It is usually located near OPEN 9 (middle row, southern side of the room) but the necessary CD Label Print software has also been installed on OPEN 4 and OPEN 10.

This printer is called **IP4850 CDL** and can only be used when connected by USB cable to the computer on which it is being used i.e. **OPEN 4, OPEN 9 or OPEN 10.**

**Please note that you can only access this printer from the computer to which it is connected—it is not a network printer.**

## "SCANNING SMORGASBORD"

**Wednesday May 7th**

**10 am 'til 12 noon**

Judy Hall and the team will show you the procedures that you need to follow to turn those slides you took on an old camera into digital photos that you can store on your computer.

There will be two (2) slide-scanners available so please bring along some of your slides so that you can get your own slide-scanning project started.

Those of you who don't have slides can still participate by bringing along your 'non-digital' photos which can also be scanned and turned into computer-based images.

The second stage of the session will be a segment on how to burn the digital images that you have scanned to CD or DVD so that you can distribute copies to friends and family.

But wait ... There's more!

The final topic to be covered will be the creation of labels that will add a professional touch to your photo CDs and DVDs.

This can be achieved by printing on to special label stationery or directly to 'printable' CDs and DVDs.

## DON'T TOUCH THAT SWITCH!!!

There is a switch located near the door to our storeroom that has a somewhat dilapidated sign on it asking members **not to turn it off**.

The reason is that the switch provides power to our Internet router, Server and Admin computers so turning it off will disable all those services.

Unfortunately the switch also supplies power to our Toshiba printer and in a recent moment of panic a member inadvertently used the 'master switch' on the wall rather than the power button on the printer.

Turning the switch back on will restore Internet facilities but it may take a few minutes before services are resumed.

## OPEN NEWSLETTER – MAY 2014

### INTERNET SECURITY—FOLLOW UP SESSION

**Wednesday May 21st**

**10 am to 12 noon**

Join Rob Tierney to hear more about the information and software you need to make your Internet browsing a safe and enjoyable experience.

The authors of malware and spyware are regularly updating their 'nasties' so you need to be aware of the steps needed to keep them from compromising the performance of your computers.

### INTRODUCTION TO MICROSOFT POWERPOINT

**Part 2**

**May 21st from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm**

Rob Tierney will conduct Part 2 of the series on how to create your own PowerPoint presentation, or slide-show.

Ideally participants will have attended Part 1 on April 30th.

PowerPoint presentations can be used for a variety of tasks such as delivering lectures, displaying a succession of photos from your recent holiday or collating information for a personal project.

Rob will explore more of the possibilities for you.

### PRINTER REPLACEMENT

Members who have experienced the frustrations of paper-jams and other mishaps with our Toshiba 282 printer will be pleased to know that the committee is currently in the process of selecting a replacement.

This will take a week or two to sort out as there are many factors to consider—purchase price, running costs, network compatibility and 'future-proofing' (*making sure that the printer will meet our needs in the coming years*).

Let's hope that the wait is worth it!

### LEVEL 2 & 3 GRAPHICS

**With Paint Shop Pro 7 and 8**

**Wednesday May 14th**

**10:00 am to 12:00 noon**

### ADVANCED GRAPHICS

**With Paint Shop Pro XI**

**Beginners**

**Wednesday May 28th**

**1:00 pm to 3:00 pm**

### TUTORS MEETING

**Friday May 16th**

**1:00 to 3:00 pm**

No Friday Beginners class on this day.

### FAMILY HISTORY 2014

**Wednesday May 14th**

**1:00 pm to 3:00 pm**

**Wednesday May 28th**

**10:00 am to 12:00 noon**

New information is being added to our resources on an on-going basis to help you trace your family's origins. Contact the club for more information.

**Classes limited to 8 people.**

Join Judy, Margaret G and Sandra V tutors for these informative sessions.

## OPEN Session Times

At Studioworks, 1 Pipeworks Rd, L'ton

**Standard Sessions \$6.00**

[Some special tutorial materials may incur additional charges]

Monday	10 am –12	General & Beginners
	1 pm – 3 pm	<b>Basics and Beyond</b>
	<b>3:30 pm – 5:30 pm</b>	<b>Beginners Class</b>
Tuesday	10 am –12	O-Learn & Beginners [all day]
	1 pm – 3 pm	<b>Mac [all day]</b>
	7 pm–9 pm	Basics (Night Class)
Wednesday		Special sessions or Meetings
		As for mornings (see rosters)
Thursday	10 am –12	General & Beginners
	1 pm – 3 pm	General & Beginners
Friday	10 am –12	General & Beginners
	1 pm – 3 pm	Beginners Class

## OPEN NEWSLETTER – MAY 2014

### SPECIAL WEDNESDAY SESSIONS

Please register on the sheets – numbers may be limited

Date			
<b>May 7</b>	10 am–12 noon		
	<b>1 pm onwards</b>	<b>OPEN Monthly Meeting</b>	Presentation of Financial Reports and General Business. <b>Followed by Public Trustee info session</b>
		<b>Launceston Computer Group</b>	<b>NO LCG MEETING IN MAY</b>
<b>May 14</b>	10 am–12 noon	Level 2 and 3 Graphics Class	Advanced graphics using Paint Shop Pro 7 and 8
	<b>1 pm–3.00 pm</b>	<b>Family History</b>	<b>Judy, Margaret G and the team will help you trace your ancestors.</b>
<b>May 16 Friday</b>	<b>1 pm–3.00 pm</b>	<b>Tutors meeting</b>	An opportunity for out tutors to exchange ideas and learn new skills for the benefit of our members.
<b>May 21</b>	10 am–12 noon	Internet Security 2	Rob Tierney will provide more information on how to keep your computers Internet safe.
	<b>1 pm–3.00 pm</b>	<b>PowerPoint Part 2</b>	<b>Learn more from Rob Tierney on how to create a PowerPoint slide-show or presentation.</b>
<b>May 28</b>	10 am–12 noon	Family History	Use our extensive range of resources or use Ancestry.com on-line to research your Family History.
	<b>1 pm–3.00 pm</b>	<b>Graphics Beginners PSP XI</b>	<b>Re-introduced after 3 years this course enable users at all levels to learn Graphics skills.</b>

## OPEN NEWSLETTER MAY 2014

### CHAIN REACTION

As I started to write this story many possible titles came to mind but 'Chain Reaction' seemed appropriate considering the series of events that one seemingly harmless action created.

You won't often find articles in this newsletter that feature Apple Macintosh devices but in this instance they were both the cause and partial cure for the situation.

#### Shoot first, ask questions later?

One of our innovative members decided to make a movie of a concert he attended by setting up his iPad in 'video mode'. A little over an hour later the concert and the movie were finished and could be viewed on the iPad without any drama.

As one of the performers in the concert has requested a copy of the movie our member then connected the iPad to his Windows laptop and tried to play it. No luck! His laptop reported that the 'MOV' file was only 4 Megabytes in size which just isn't possible for a video file that is around 70 minutes.

#### iMac to the rescue?

In an inspired moment we figured that if the movie was created on one Apple device then perhaps it would be playable on another Apple device namely one of OPENS iMac computers. So we connected the iPad to iMac1, fired up iTunes and looked for the movie and pictures on the iPad.

No way! We then used the iPhoto program and while we could see 'ghostly' thumbnails of the pictures and the movie file we could not open them. In a final act of hope or desperation we started up iMac2 (the club's other Macintosh computer). This has a later version of the Mac operating system. Success at last! We could view and open the movie file, and importantly, copy it to the iMac's hard-drive.

### CHAIN REACTION (the saga continues)

#### Problem 3—Copying the movie file.

The concert performer who had asked for copy of the movie had provided a 32GB USB flash-drive for the purpose and a quick check showed that there was plenty of space available to accommodate an 8.93 GB file.

But it couldn't be transferred because the flash-drive was formatted in the 'old' FAT32 mode. FAT32 can only handle files up to a maximum of 4 GB. To handle such a large movie file (nearly 9 GB) the flash-drive would have to be re-formatted in the 'new' NTFS mode but in doing so all existing data would be deleted. I was unwilling to do that without the owner's permission.

And if anyone is wondering why we didn't consider burning the movie to a dual-layer DVD I can tell you that the capacity of one of those is only 8.5GB ... not enough space for an 8.93 GB file!

#### The Solution—a Work in Progress

I had encountered a similar problem earlier in the year when trying to move a large video file from one computer to another. To achieve that operation I had formatted one of my external hard-drives in NTFS style.

Remembering this I then used that external drive to copy the movie file from the Apple iMac to OPEN15 and in time I will try and convert the High Definition MOV file to a format that can be burned to a DVD.

#### Conclusion

Many of you may be thinking that nothing in the preceding article is relevant to you but it does raise some interesting points.

1. As a PC user are you aware of the maximum file-size that your flash-drive(s) can handle?
2. When you are using a tablet device in video mode do you understand that you may be creating a movie file that is literally 'bigger than Ben Hur'.

### A QUICK INTERNET 'FIX'

What is it about computers?

One minute you're sailing along smoothly then without warning you lose your Internet service, you can't get e-mail and your printer is not communicating with your computer.

I have seen two instances of this problem in the last couple of weeks and both have eventually been rectified by simply turning off the wireless modem-router for a couple of minutes and then turning it back on.

I've used the word **eventually** because in the first case my initial thoughts were that the Internet service may have been turned off due to non-payment of the account.

If you do lose your Internet the first thing you should check are the lights on your modem—if you have Power, ADSL (or Internet), Ethernet (optional) and the Wireless symbol all illuminated in yellow or green then you have a connection to the Internet.

Where the problem lay in both these cases was with the local network. The tell-tale signs were the inability to connect to the Internet **and** the lack of communication between the computers and the network printers, both of which had wireless capability.

Resetting the modem-router by turning it off temporarily will reset the network but you may need to wait for a few minutes before communications between computers, printers and other network devices is re-established.

**Dennis**

### COMING UP IN JUNE

The special classes in June will start off with an **Introduction to Microsoft Publisher** on the morning of Wednesday June 4th, with 'yours truly' doing the session.

On the morning of June 18 Judy Hall will conduct another of the popular **FreeRip** sessions which shows you how to extract MP3 sound files from your own CDs.

Judy will again be on deck for the re-scheduled Computer Maintenance session on the afternoon of June 18.

**Dennis**

ABOUT TWO YEARS AGO MALAYSIA AIRLINES ISSUED  
THIS AD  
IRONIC NOW

The screenshot shows the Malaysia Airlines website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, Contact, Sign Up, and Login. Below this is a menu with options like BOOK & PLAN, DEALS, MH EXPERIENCE, DESTINATIONS, ENRICH, BOOK, PACKAGES, MANAGE, and CHECK-IN. The main content area features a large image of a Boeing 777 in flight, with the text: "OUR NEW BOEING 777 LOSE YOURSELF ON A JOURNEY OF EPIC PROPORTIONS". Below this is a smaller image of a couple on a boat, with the text: "WHEREVER YOU GO NO ONE WILL EVER KNOW". A "Sign Up Now" button is visible in the bottom left corner of the boat image.



Sometimes I Wonder...  
"Why is That Frisbee  
Getting Bigger?"  
...and Then it Hits Me.

Top Story

## Emergency repair disks for Windows: Part 1

By Fred Langa

When your PC won't boot from its hard drive, you might be dead in the water — unless you've created a bootable emergency repair disk or drive.

Repair disks don't simply get PCs started; they also include tools that might fix what's wrong with the system. And creating a repair disk takes just minutes.

### Rescue-disk options for all Windows versions

There are various ways to create self-contained, emergency, boot/repair disks. With Win7 and 8, creating excellent repair discs is quick and easy. Vista and XP also offer repair disk-creation tools, but the process takes a bit more effort.

There are also numerous third-party boot disks — both free and paid — that work with all versions of Windows. The best of these have repair and recovery options that far exceed Windows' native tools.

Of course, you can boot PCs using original Windows installation CDs or DVDs, and they provide some basic recovery tools. But most PCs now ship with the setup files in a special partition on the hard drive. Those files will be inaccessible if you didn't take the time to create an emergency boot disk. In other words, a recovery partition might do you no good whatsoever in an emergency if you can't boot the PC!

Even if you've diligently made system-image backups, you might still need an emergency disk at hand to restore the most recent image.

In Part 1 of this two-part article, I'll discuss a wide range of emergency repair disks for XP, Vista, Win7, and Win8. I'll start with the options in Windows 8 and work back to XP. I'll also begin with Windows' built-in tools and then mention some excellent third-party products — most of them free!

Next week, in Part 2, you'll see how to use these disks to boot your PC and how to access what repair tools they contain. I'll also include some advanced tips and tricks.

### Windows 8: Using the *Recovery Media Creator*

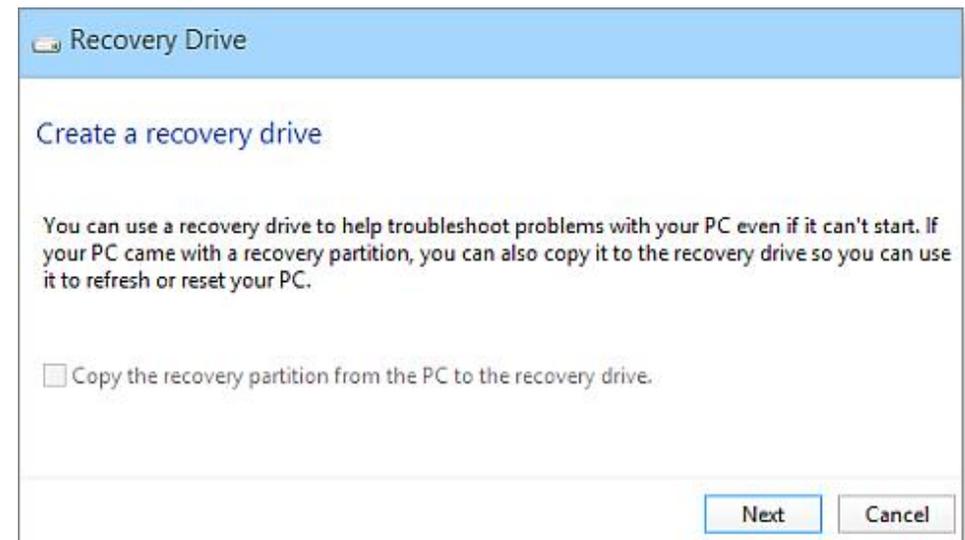
Windows 8.0 and 8.1 both include the built-in **Recovery Media Creator**. This tool lets you easily set up a flash drive or an external USB drive as a bootable recovery/repair disk. The Windows 8.0 version of the tool can make bootable CDs or DVDs as well.

A standard Win8 recovery drive (or CD/DVD) contains a bootable recovery image — a stripped-down, special-purpose version of Win8 — that will boot your PC. It also includes tools for repairing or restoring your main Win8 setup. It might also include tools for resetting or refreshing the PC from a full system image, such as that provided by the original manufacturer.

If your PC contains an accessible, factory-installed recovery image (typically, in its own dedicated partition), Recovery Media Creator (RMC) can also add the image to the bootable recovery drive. If necessary, you can completely rebuild your system solely from the recovery drive. (You can even place a custom restore image on the recovery drive. I'll cover that in Part 2.)

The Recovery Media Creator is very easy to use. Here's how:

- In an admin-level account, type **Win + W** (the Windows-flag key plus the **W** key) or swipe to open the Charms menu bar.
- Enter **recovery drive** in the search box (use the Search/Settings box on Win8.0) and then click the **Create a recovery drive** icon when it appears. The Recovery Drive tool will open (see Figure 1).



- Figure 1. Windows 8's *Recovery Media Creator* is point-and-click simple to use.
- If your system has a recovery partition, select whether you want to include the

recovery image with the new, bootable recovery/repair drive.

If the **Copy the recovery partition from the PC to the recovery drive** checkbox is shown in black and is clickable, you can add your PC's factory-installed recovery image to the recovery drive. Simply check the box to enable this option.

If that checkbox is grayed out and unclickable, then obviously you can't add a factory image to your recovery drive. But don't worry; your new recovery drive will still contain a bootable, stripped-down Win8 recovery image plus the standard array of recovery/repair tools.

When you're ready, click Next.

- RMC will then tell you how much space the recovery files — and system image, if selected — will take. Connect a USB drive to your PC that's at least equal to the required size. Keep in mind that the drive can be used *only* as a bootable recovery/repair drive; everything else on the drive will be deleted.
- If you have more than one USB drive attached, RMC will list available drives. Select the one you want to use for the recovery drive and click Next. The next dialog box will warn you that everything on the selected USB drive will be overwritten. When you're ready, click Create.
- The bootable recovery image, the recovery/repair tools, and the factory image (if selected) will now be copied to the recovery/repair drive. This might take several minutes.
- If you chose to copy a factory image, RMC will now give you the option of deleting the OEM recovery partition from your hard drive, to save space. Delete or keep the partition — it's your choice.
- Click Finish.
- Unplug the USB drive and store it in a safe place.

For more information on Win8's Recovery Media Creator, see the Microsoft Support page, "Create a USB recovery drive."

## Windows 7: The *Create a system repair disc* tool

Win7 was the first Windows to ship with an automated tool for creating bootable emergency repair CDs or DVDs. The tool doesn't do as much as the Win8 version — for example, you can't add an OEM recovery image — but it does keep things simple. With just a few clicks, your recovery disc is

done!

Here's how:

- Insert a blank CD/DVD into the PC's optical drive.
- In an admin account, open the Backup and Restore applet; click **Start/Control Panel/System and Security/Backup and Restore**.
- In the applet's left pane, click **Create a system repair disc**.
- Confirm that the correct optical drive is selected. Click **Create disc** (see Figure 2) and follow the on-screen steps.

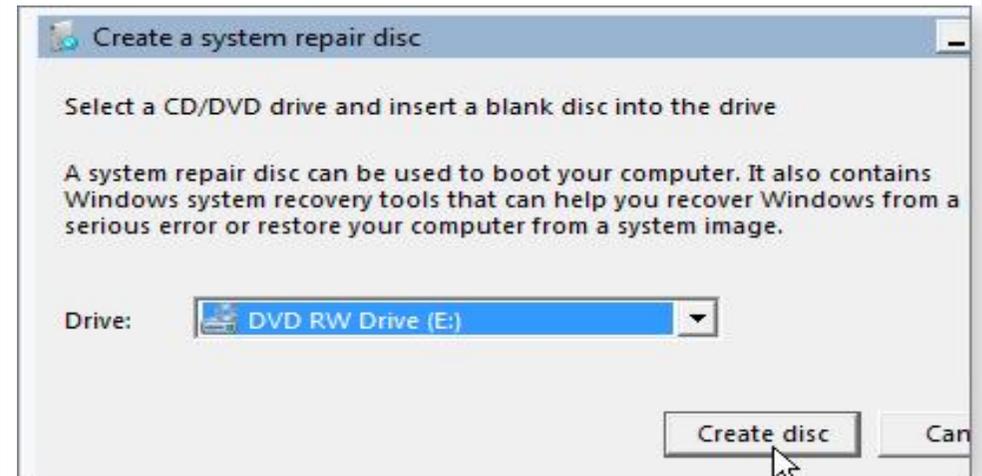


Figure 2. Win7's *Create a system repair disc* lets you build a bootable repair CD/DVD with just a few clicks.

**Note:** If Win7 can't find the files it needs, it'll prompt you to insert a Windows installation disc.

For more details, Microsoft offers a video tutorial on its Win7 "Create a system repair disc"

## Vista: Enabling and using *Create Recovery Disk*

A beta version of Vista SP1 shipped with the nice **Create Recovery Disk (recdisc.exe)** utility (see Figure 3). But, for reasons known only to Microsoft, the utility was neutered in all production

versions. The **recdisc.exe** file still lives in Vista — but it doesn't function!

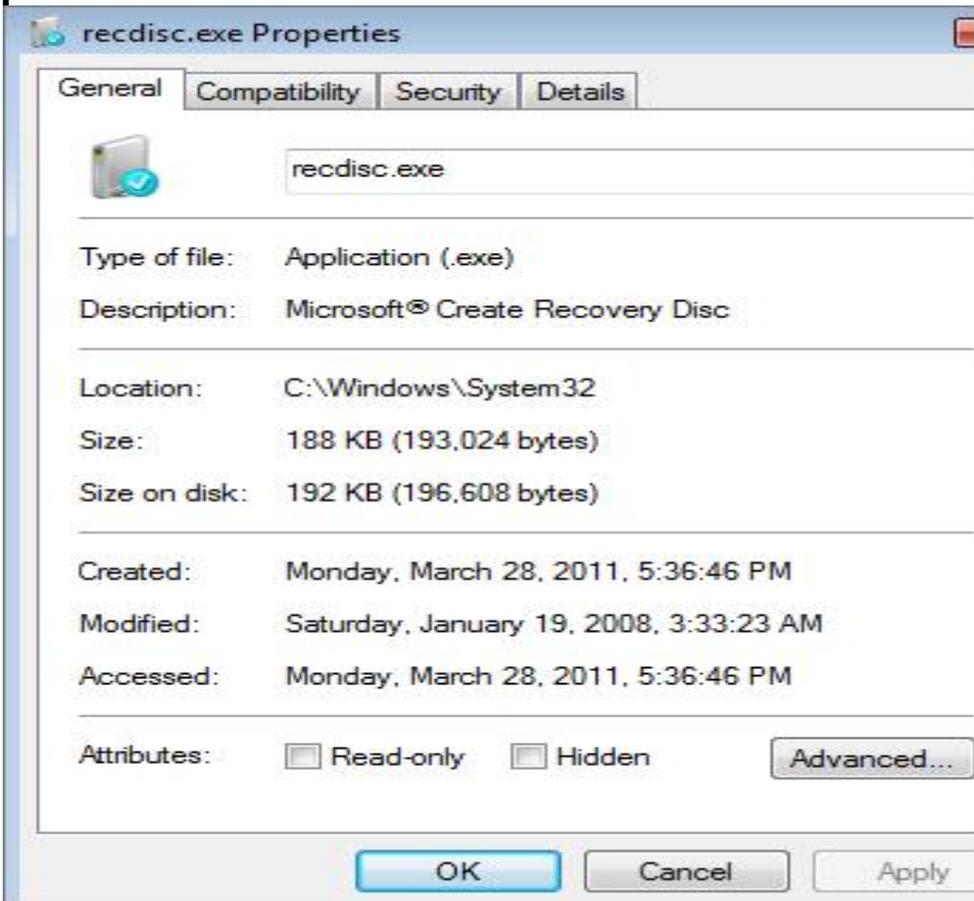


Figure 3. Vista's vestigial *recdisc.exe* is nonfunctional by default; but with a little work, it can be made useful.

However, enthusiasts liked the working version of the utility. So they made the files available for download — along with how-to information. It's not an officially sanctioned option, but it has been openly discussed and recommended by Microsoft MVPs in the Microsoft Answers forum. For example, see the Microsoft Answers [thread](#) "Creating system recovery disk for Windows Vista."

Obtaining **recdisk.exe** isn't difficult, but the steps are too long to detail here. The third-party

VistaForums , "How to create a Vista recovery disc," contains the best how-to instructions I know of. The only thing I'd add to the how-to is the standard admonition: **Make a backup** before applying any system alterations.

If the above is outside your comfort zone, consider using a third-party boot disc, as discussed below.

## Windows XP: Third-party tool is needed

XP has no native, built-in option for creating a bootable emergency repair disk.

For years, the best alternative was **UBCD4Win** (Ultimate Boot CD for Windows). But creating that boot disc is a long and complex process that requires some technical prowess and access to a full-blown XP setup CD.

UBCD4Win ) is still around — and still free — but I no longer recommend it. There's now a better tool.

**Hiren's BootCD** offers an astonishing array of freeware tools — close to 100 in all<sup>2</sup>).

The CD itself is Linux-based, but you don't have to know Linux; the text-based main app has simple menus for choosing the tools you want to run. (See Figure 4.)

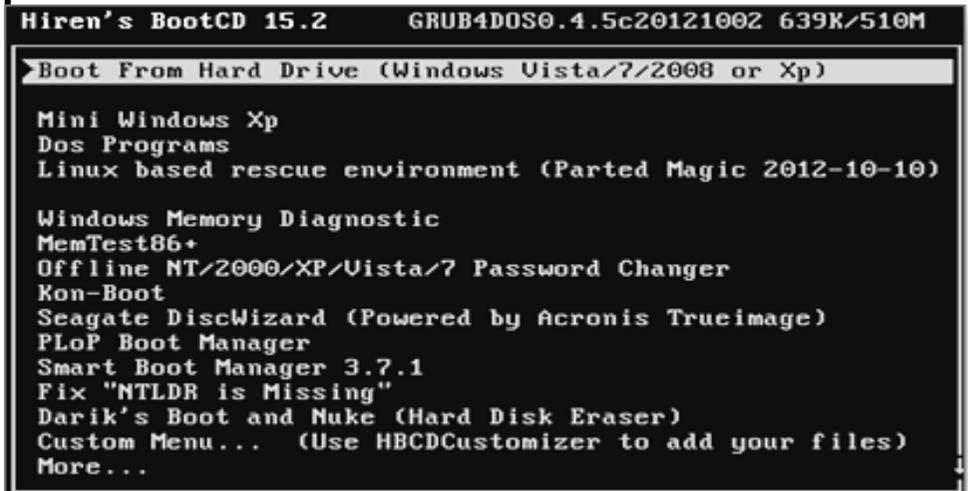


Figure 4. *Hiren's BootCD* offers an array of about 100 freeware repair/recovery tools.

Oddly, Hiren's BootCD also contains a stripped-down "MiniXP," offered on a "grayware" honor-  
(Continued on page 11)

system basis. It's intended as an emergency repair tool for use by owners of legitimate, paid-for copies of XP — not as a replacement for buying a license or as a standard XP setup. Within that limited context, it works fine. When your regular (legitimate and paid-for) XP setup won't boot, Hiren's BootCD's MiniXP can help you get it going again.

You can get Hiren's BootCD on its [download page](#). But finding the correct download link can be a challenge — the page contains several distracting, alternate download links for unrelated tools.

The true link to Hiren's BootCD's download file is toward the bottom of the page and appears — as of this writing — as shown in Figure 5.



Figure 5. Actual *Hiren's BootCD* download link

## All Windows versions: Free repair disks

If Windows' native tools are unavailable or won't work for you, there are many free, alternative, boot/repair disks. Like Hiren's BootCD, most are Linux-based and come preconfigured with a wide range of maintenance and recovery tools.

Here are four of the best:

- **Trinity Rescue Kit** (free/donationware; [home page](#) is designed specifically for recovery and repair operations on Windows machines but can also be used for Linux recovery issues. It uses a simple text-and-keyboard menu system by default, with a Linux command line also available.
- **Ultimate Boot CD** (contains over 100 repair/restore/diagnostic tools in an easy-to-use, text-and-keyboard menu interface.
- **SystemRescueCd** (free; provides basic repair/recovery tools in a hybrid text/graphical Linux environment.
- **Ubuntu Rescue Remix** (free—offers a range of open-source data recovery, repair, and forensics tools. However, it's almost entirely Linux command-line based, which might make it challenging for those more comfortable in a point-and-click environment.

## The automated *Easy Recovery Essentials*

NeoSmart Technologies' **Easy Recovery Essentials** tools deserve separate discussion. They're favorably mentioned in almost every online Windows repair/recovery forum.

In part, it's because the tools are quite good and can work on all Windows versions — XP, Vista, Win7, Win8, Windows Server.

But the tools' popularity developed partly because they were free. Although many online discussion forums still refer to the NeoSmart discs as free, they are in fact now commercial products. Fees start at U.S. \$20 for the Home editions of Easy Recovery Essentials and go up to \$75 for Server editions. You can find a list of all versions and prices on the NeoSmart [site](#)

For what is a really modest price, you get a bootable **.iso** image that you can download and burn to a CD, DVD, or USB drive. Once launched, Easy Recovery Essentials offers highly automated repair and recovery options. In fact, many complex repair operations can be launched with one simple click — no further user input required.

You can get an idea of how easy the tools are to use in a NeoSmart video. NeoSmart also offers a money-back guarantee

## Which recovery/repair tool is right for you?

I suggest you start with the native Windows tools, if possible. They'll handle most routine tasks and might be all you need. They also offer familiar operation and few surprises. Hey — you've already paid for them!

If the Windows tools don't work for you, try the free Linux-based bootable recovery/repair disks. Although the Linux environment might be unfamiliar to most Windows users — especially Linux command-line tools — there's usually enough documentation to help you through any rough spots.

If neither the built-in Windows tools nor the free Linux tools work for you, then commercial tools might be ideal. NeoSmart's Easy Recovery Essentials tools, in particular, work well, are extremely simple to use, and come with a money-back guarantee.

**Next week:** You'll see how to use these repair/recovery disks to boot your PC and to access the tools they contain. I'll also include some advanced tips and tricks. Stay tuned!

## Emergency repair disks for Windows: Part 2

Part 2 tells how to use a repair disk on all PCs — including those locked down with Win8's Secure Boot — and also gives some advanced tips and tricks.

**Creating a repair disk is the first step A good repair disk or drive (collectively, disk) is a fundamental tool for troubleshooting an ailing Windows. Every PC owner/manager should have one for each system — and know where it resides. There are multiple repair-disk options for all versions of Windows, from XP on. Part 1 of this series lists nine, most of them free.**

XP requires third-party tools for creating repair disks, and enabling Vista's built-in app takes some efforts. But both Windows 7 and 8 make the process easy and include numerous troubleshooting tools.

Creating a repair disk is a necessary first step; the next is ensuring the disk correctly boots the PC. Some systems — especially Win8 systems with Secure Boot enabled — take a little prep work.

That's the starting point for the exercises in this article. You'll see how to use emergency boot/repair disks to start just about any PC, then use those repair tools included on the disk.

- **Make an initial test of your emergency disk If you haven't yet created an emergency boot/repair disk or drive for your version of Windows, please do so now. See the April 10 Top Story , “Emergency repair disks for Windows: Part 1.” Depending on how your system is set up, booting a PC from its rescue disk might not require anything unusual — or you might have to change one or two settings.**

The best way to find out is also the simplest:

Shut down all software, exit Windows, and turn your PC completely off (i.e., a full power-off shutdown). Place your boot/repair CD/DVD into your PC's optical drive or plug the rescue drive into a USB socket. Turn your PC on.

If your PC boots from the rescue disk, you're done! Simply label it and store it in a safe place. If you're using Win8, skip to the end of this article for those aforementioned advanced tips and tricks.

On the other hand, if your PC fails to boot from the rescue disk, use the following steps to make the necessary adjustments to your system.

**Controlling your PC's startup With all PCs, initial startup is controlled by low-level software that wakes up the system's components in the correct order and then hands off control to Windows.**

In older systems, that software is the Basic Input/Output System — commonly referred to as BIOS.

Most newer systems use the far more powerful and flexible Unified Extensible Firmware Interface — or UEFI. (See Woody Leonhard's Jan. 19, 2012, Top Story , “Say goodbye to BIOS — and hello to UEFI!”)

UEFI has been around for years, but early versions (mostly in Vista- and Win7-era PCs) usually simply mimicked classic BIOS, perhaps with a few extra features thrown in.

Version 8 was the first Windows to fully exploit UEFI. The OS's Secure Boot feature uses UEFI to make the boot process resistant to unauthorized changes by malware and other factors. (See the Microsoft article , “Securing the Windows 8 boot process.”)

(I'll discuss UEFI in a bit more detail later. But for now, as shorthand, I'll use “BIOS” to refer to both the classic BIOS and UEFI.)

Virtually all PCs have a boot-order setting in BIOS that lets you define the sequence of devices a PC should access at startup. The PC checks each listed device, one after another, looking for an operating system to boot from. Typical boot devices include a hard drive, optical drive, USB drive, and the network.

Obviously, if the standard, hard drive–installed version of Windows won't boot correctly, you want to ensure that the system looks for the rescue disk first. So to boot from a rescue CD or DVD, the PC's optical drive should be listed first in BIOS's boot order.

Or, to boot from a rescue drive, the first device in the list should be a USB drive.

**Two ways to change a system's boot order** Virtually all pre-Win8 PCs — and even some Win8 systems — offer two easy ways to change a PC's boot order.

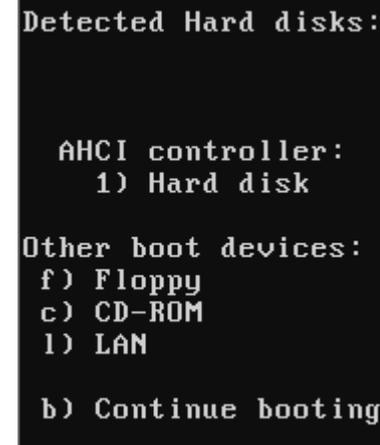
*First method: At the very start of bootup, most PCs display an on-screen message that says something such as Press {some key} to select Boot Device (see Figure 1).*



Press F12 to select Boot Device...

Figure 1. On this system, pressing the F12 key selects the boot device.

On my test system, it's the F12 key; on other PCs, it could be any other key or key combination. (Note: This is not the key combination that pops up the BIOS settings. You'll use the BIOS settings for the second method described below.) Press the key or keys for your particular machine. You should then see a boot-order menu — something similar to the example in Figure 2.



```
Detected Hard disks:
```

```
AHCI controller:  
1) Hard disk
```

```
Other boot devices:
```

```
f) Floppy  
c) CD-ROM  
1) LAN
```

```
b) Continue booting
```

Figure 2. A typical boot-order menu. Simply press the designated key to boot from a listed device.

Next, simply select the device you want to boot from. In the example shown (your PC's options could be different), you'd press the c key to boot from your rescue disk in the optical drive.

The selection you make in this menu is one time only. At the next boot, the system will revert to its normal boot order.

*Second method: As noted above, this option uses the BIOS settings menus. It'll let you make boot-order changes semipermanent.*

Again, at the start of the boot process, look for the on-screen message that states something along the lines of Press {some other key} to enter BIOS setup. Press whatever key or key combination opens your BIOS settings editor.

Boot-order settings are usually on a page or screen labeled Boot (or something similar); you then change the boot order by rearranging the listed devices. (See Figure 3.)

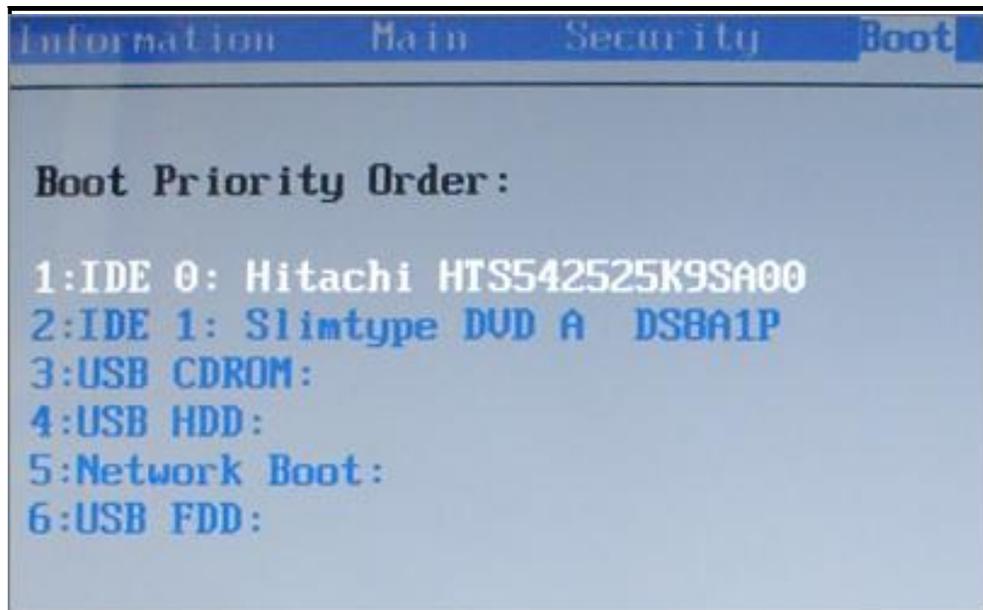


Figure 3. Virtually all PCs let you set the default boot order in BIOS.

Following the on-screen directions, place the device you plan to use for the rescue disk at the top of the list. When you're done, save your changes and exit the BIOS settings, typically by pressing the F10 key.

Your system should now restart and boot from the rescue disk. Keep in mind that the new boot-device order will stay in effect until you alter it again.

If neither of those methods works on your pre-Win8 PC and it doesn't show any obvious way to change boot order, visit the vendor's online support site and search for instructions specific to your brand and model of PC. Good search terms to use include access BIOS, enter BIOS, and edit BIOS.

**Working around Windows 8's Secure Boot** As mentioned above, most UEFI-based Win8 systems enable a special, tamper-resistant startup

that locks down the boot process and is designed to prevent unauthorized modifications. This Secure Boot feature makes the use of a rescue/repair disk a bit more complicated.

- For example, to change boot order, it usually takes a few extra steps simply to get into the UEFI settings. Then, you must disable Secure Boot entirely if you want to ensure that a PC can boot from a non-Microsoft repair disk or drive.
- Here's one easy way to accomplish both tasks in Win8.1. (Win8.0 is very similar; for specifics, see the Oct. 3, 2013, LangaList Plus .)

Save and back up all your work; close all running apps. Open the Charms bar, click the gear icon (Settings) and then click Change PC settings at the bottom of the bar. On the PC settings page, select Update and recovery. Click Recovery and then, under Advanced startup, click Restart now. (Despite the terminology, your PC will not immediately restart — that's normal.) On the Choose an option screen, click Troubleshoot and then click **Advanced options**. **If a UEFI Firmware Settings option appears, select it. (It might also be under a somewhat different label, such as Change UEFI Settings.)** If no such option exists, skip the rest of these steps. On the UEFI Firmware Settings screen, select Restart. Your PC will restart and run the built-in UEFI setup utility. UEFI settings often look much like classic BIOS setup pages — and typically work in much the same way. Follow the on-screen directions for navigating to and selecting the settings you're going to change. The UEFI boot-order settings are usually under the Boot section (or something similar). As above, change the PC's boot order so that the optical drive or a USB drive is at the top of the list. Your options will likely look something like those shown above in Figure 3. Next, if you're going to use a non-Microsoft rescue boot disk, disable Secure Boot. The Secure Boot settings are often found under Security (see Figure 4), Boot, Authentication, or something similar

*(Continued on page 15)*



Figure 4. Secure Boot is typically enabled by default. Select Disabled to use a non-Microsoft rescue/repair disk.

When you're done, save your settings and exit (typically by pressing the F10 key). Your system should now restart and boot from the rescue disk. If you disabled Secure Boot, the system will also bypass Win8's normal boot restrictions. When you're done testing your rescue disk — or when you've finished using it in a real emergency — re-enable Secure Boot via the steps above.

If there's no UEFI Firmware Settings option in Windows 8's Advanced options screen, your particular system might use a different method for accessing UEFI settings — such as the old-school trick of pressing a specific function key during initial boot.

Some PC brands use a special OEM tool or dashboard, often accessed from the Windows Start menu, that lets you access the UEFI boot settings, either immediately or after a reboot.

- If none of those options is offered, visit the PC vendor's online support site and search for instructions specific to your brand and model of PC.

For more information on managing Win8's Secure Boot, see:

“Secure Boot overview” – MS TechNet article “Windows startup settings” – MS Windows 8 article “Boot a PC in UEFI mode or legacy BIOS-compatibility mode” – TechNet article Two advanced tips for Windows 8 users I wish I could give advanced tips for all Windows versions, but most emergency rescue/repair disks are take-it-or-leave-it propositions. You get whatever comes on the disk, and that's that. There's usually no way to alter the disk's contents.

- However, Win8's Recovery Media Creator is different. As noted in Part 1 of this series, it lets you add your own custom recovery image to the recovery drive.
- This lets you do more than just boot and repair your PC; you can also use the recovery disk for a custom Refresh (a nondestructive reinstall) or custom Reset (full reinstall) of Win8. For more on Refresh and Reset, see these two related Top Stories: Aug. 15, 2013, “A ‘no-reformat reinstall’ for Windows 8,” and Sept. 12, 2013, “A clean-slate reinstall for Windows 8.” Tip 1: How to create a custom recovery disk:

If you haven't already done so, create a custom recovery image by following the steps in the Oct. 10, 2013, Top Story, “Creating customized recovery images for Win8.” Next, create a new, empty folder inside the root folder of your C: drive; name it Win8-Recovery (in other words, create C:\Win8-Recovery). **Copy your new custom recovery image from wherever you placed it (typically in a RefreshImage folder) and paste it into the C:\Win8-Recovery folder. Then rename the pasted file as INSTALL.WIM (i.e., C:\Win8-Recovery\INSTALL.WIM). Open an admin-level command prompt — e.g., press Win + X and select Command Prompt (Admin). Enter the following command to register the copied/renamed INSTALL.WIM file as the recovery image on your PC: REAGENTC /SetOSImage /Path C:\Win8-Recovery\INSTALL.WIM /Index 1 Use the Win8 Recovery Media Creator to create a new recovery**

drive, following the steps in “Emergency repair disks for Windows: Part 1 .” When prompted, enable the Copy the recovery partition from the PC to the recovery drive option; your custom recovery image will then be added to the new recovery drive.

(For more detail, see the Microsoft Answers thread , “Windows 8.1 and making a USB Recovery Drive.”)

**Tip 2: This second tip lets you get around a limitation in Win8.1’s Recovery Media Creator.**

As mentioned in Part 1 of this series, Win8.1’s Recovery Media Creator can make only a recovery flash drive; whereas the 8.0 version of the tool is able to create bootable CDs or DVDs — as well as a recovery flash drive.

But Win8.1 users can get what amounts to a free rescue/repair DVD directly from Microsoft! Simply download a free, 90-day evaluation copy of Win8.1.

Prior to the download, you have to provide an email address and answer a few basic questions, but there’s no cost whatsoever.

The evaluation copy is an .iso file, which you can burn to a DVD. The resulting disk is bootable and fully functional. It also includes a Repair your computer option (see Figure 5) that’s equivalent to the standard repair tools created by Win8’s built-in Recovery Media Creator.



Figure 5. The Win8.1 evaluation edition is bootable and fully functional. As highlighted above, it contains the standard complement of Win8 repair/restoration tools!

The free evaluation copy of Win8.1 is available to anyone. Download your copy via a Microsoft TechNet page . (Note: The download is for the Enterprise version, but the boot and repair tools work on any Win 8 version. You can boot from the Enterprise disks and use the basic repair tools as they are. You also can use the Enterprise boot disks to refresh or reset your system from your own system’s images.)

***A rescue disk for all reasons — and all Windows. This two-part series should help all users of Windows — from XP on — recover from problems such as malware attacks to complete hard-drive failures — and everything in between. Make sure you have an emergency rescue disk or drive ready and wait!***



**May 2014 SCAMwatch** is warning consumers to be on the lookout for energy billing scams currently doing the rounds. A new phishing email pretending to be from reputable energy companies is currently circulating, which claims you owe money for an outstanding gas or electricity bill. The email will ask you to click on a link to view or update your account and arrange payment via money transfer. If you click on the link, you risk infecting your computer with malware and having your personal information stolen. If you pay this 'bill' via money transfer, you will never see your money again.

Beware – reports have also been received about scammers approaching consumers via phone, SMS and post. Don't let scammers raise the temperature of your heating bill in the lead-up to winter – if you receive an email out of the blue from someone claiming that you owe their company money for an outstanding energy bill, press delete.

**How the scam works** You receive an email out of the blue from someone claiming to be from a reputable energy company, informing you that you owe money for 2013 energy usage. The email may appear to come from an official part of the energy company such as the 'Accounts Payable', 'Receivable Department' or the 'Accounts Receivable Team'. The email may even have all the trademarks of a bill – it may state that it is a gas or electricity bill, and include a fake account number, account summary, billing period details and due date for payment. However, on closer inspection, the email may contain spelling and grammatical errors – a tell-tale sign that something is amiss. The email may claim that the reason for the outstanding amount is that you have exceeded your energy consumption limit. It may even claim that you are eligible to use a discounted energy tariff to pay the bill if you click on the link. The email directs you to click on an embedded link, attachment or zip file to access your account and view your statement, and then direct you to a money transfer service with instructions on how to pay the bill. If you click the link or attachment, your computer may be infected with malicious software and your identity compromised. If you transfer money, you'll never see it again.

Note: you don't have to be a customer of the energy company claiming that you owe them money to receive this email.

**Protect yourself** If you receive an email out of the blue from someone claiming that you owe money for outstanding energy usage – just press 'delete'. If you're not sure whether an email is a scam, verify who they are by using their official contact details to call them directly. Never use contact details provided by the sender – find them through an independent source such as a phone book or online search. Watch out for tell-tale signs – whilst the sender may claim to be from an official source, their email may contain spelling mistakes or use poor grammar. Never click on links or open attachments in an email from an unverified sender – they may contain a malicious virus. Keep your computer secure – always update your firewall, anti-virus and anti-spyware software, and only buy from a verified source. If you think your computer's security has been compromised, use your security software to run a virus check. If you still have doubts, contact your anti-virus software provider or a computer specialist. Never send money to someone you don't know and trust – it's rare to recover money from a scammer. If you think you have provided your account details to a scammer, contact your bank or financial institution immediately.

**Report** You can report scams to the ACCC via the report a scam page on SCAMwatch or by calling 1300 795 995.

**More information** Stay one step ahead of scammers, follow @SCAMwatch\_gov on Twitter or visit .

If you have any doubts about an email's source, verify the sender by independent means - use their official contact details to check the email is legitimate before clicking on links or opening attachments.