

Having problems with SPAM ?

As most internet users know spam mail is a major problem. You may have had an email account that was getting little to no spam for some period of time then all of the sudden find your inbox flooded with unwanted email solicitation on a daily basis. What happened, and what can you do ?

If this sounds like what you are experiencing then chances are your email address has been compromised. Some spam group or groups have obtained your email address and made you their newest target! There are many ways this can occur, including but not limited to :

- Supplying any website of questionable repute with your email address, including signing up for “newsletters”, registrations, etc. Where major websites with good public reputations are unlikely to fall into this category, thousands of others may easily be using email addresses provided to them for completely unrelated “marketing” purposes which ultimately result in spam mail.
- Posting your email address on any web page that is readable, i.e. blogs, online help forums, chat groups, advertisements, etc. There are countless numbers of automatic programs that spammers use to troll the web and search for what appear to be email addresses on web pages. They generate a list then automatically start spamming those email addresses.
- Compromise through a friends' contact list / address book. A common spammer tactic is to gain access to a persons email account, get into their contacts, and record all email addresses in that persons contact list and start spamming them.
- Following “unsubscribe” links in spam messages. Most people are familiar with these... you receive an unwanted piece of spam mail that appears to be something you have “subscribed” to, although you are certain you did not. At the bottom of the message is a link to “unsubscribe”. Often times the link will take you to a web page and ask you to enter your email address to be “removed” from their list. However, if this is something you never subscribed to in the first place, chances are that by following the “unsubscribe” link you have actually confirmed to a spammer that they reached a valid email address, and your email address gets put on additional spamming lists.

So you are being inundated with spam mail. What options do you have to deal with the problem ?

First of all determine the severity of your spam problem. If you are receiving only a few spam messages per day then you may not be too far from what the average email user sees. Be protective of your email address and where it gets distributed / published and watch to see if the problem gets better.

If you are receiving a lot of spam on a daily basis, i.e. greater than 10 individual emails per day, and have been for a good length of time, then you have a persistent spam mail problem. Unfortunately, it is unlikely that this problem can be quickly resolved. Some ideas you may consider to address the issue are as follows :

- If you are using a third party email client such as Thunderbird, Outlook, etc., you may be able to get an add-on for the program that will allow you to filter incoming mail. Often times this requires some initial “training” for the filter on the part of the user. Directions for obtaining something like this are beyond the scope of this document however there are a number of solutions out there, some of which may be available for download on the internet. A Google search can provide more information.

- Obtain a secondary email address. Many people use more than one email address. They keep one that only gets used for guaranteed communication between reliable sources, and the other(s) get used for any general purpose. If you start getting spam on your “secondary” address you can have it deleted and create a new one with minimal impact.

And for ANY recipients of spam mail you can help train our filter by forwarding individual spam messages to spamcollect@minetfiber.com – This email account is regularly analyzed by our spam filter. It takes any email message it receives and uses it to “learn” what it should consider spam. Whether or not to consider a message as “spam” is determined through a scoring system applied by the filter. As it continues to see the same recurring messages in spamcollect@minetfiber.com it will be more likely to apply a higher score on subsequent submissions and eventually tag it as spam.

If you have questions in addition to those addressed by this document feel free to call our main office at (503)837-0700.