

Computer Security

Here are some tips to keep your computers safe and virus free. (And to keep users from messing with things.)

Passwords and accounts:

The main account used by residents should always be a limited account. This will prevent installing most software and making a lot of system changes. (There are still some things that can be changed. Those will be discussed in a later section.)

Your administrator account should be password protected. I would suggest that only the administrator and the board members have the password. (You should also send it to the computer team for our records.)

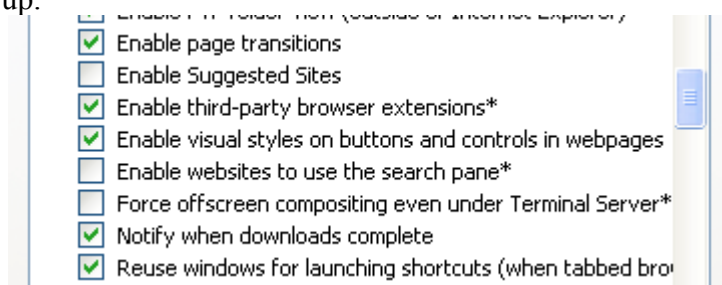
Software installation:

No other software should be installed on the computers at this time.

You may however remove programs like games that are not being used or are slowing down the system.

Residents should not be installing anything on the computers. This includes browser addons and toolbars.

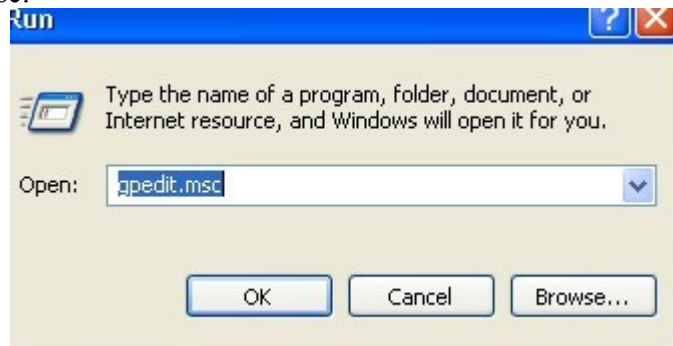
- To stop third party addons in Internet Explorer you can go to control panel. Then click on Network and Internet connections. Click on Internet options on the window that opens.
- A box will pop up.



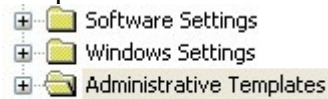
- Deselect enable third party browser extensions. Click okay and restart IE.

You also can disable extensions using the group policy editor.

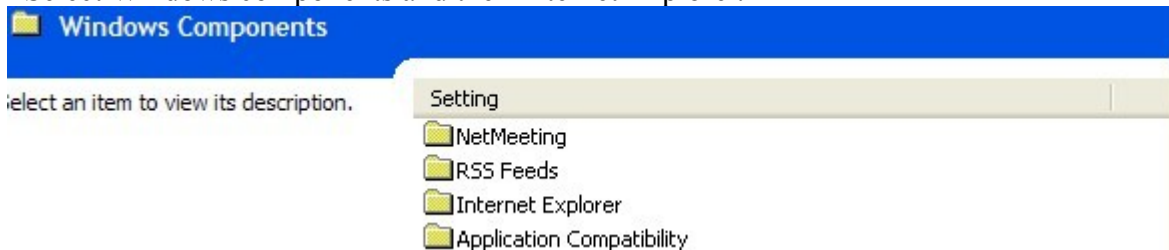
- Click on the start button.
- Click run.
- Type in gpedit.msc.



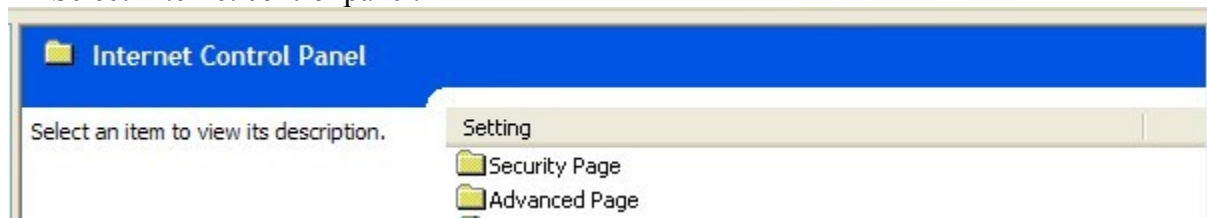
- The group policy editor window will open.
- Double click on administrative templates.



- A selection of folders will appear in the main window.
- Select Windows components and then Internet Explorer.



- Select Internet control panel.



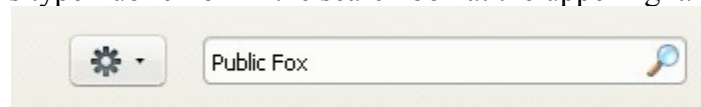
- Double click on advanced page.
- On the box that opens you will see a number of options. Double click on allow third party browser extensions.
- A box will pop up.
- Click disable and then okay.

Residents should now not be able to install toolbars and the like.

To disable extensions in Firefox you will need to install an extension called Public Fox.

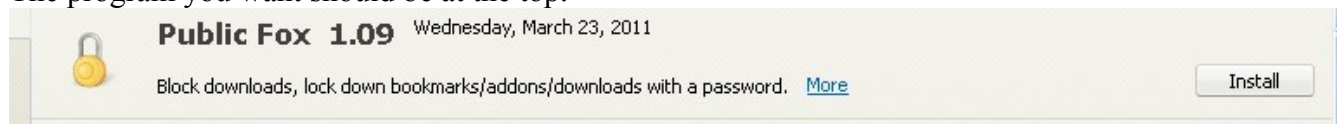
In Firefox go to the tools menu and click on add-ons.

In the window that opens type Public Fox in the search box at the upper right.



A page with your results will open.

The program you want should be at the top.



Click install.

Restart Firefox and you should be all set.

You can now set Firefox so a password will be necessary to install add-ons, add bookmarks, download programs, and a few other things.

I would strongly suggest doing both of these since toolbars run in the background and can use up system resources. They also may contain adware.

Other programs that may be resource hogs:

Google Earth
Google Desktop
A lot of games

Programs also can use up resources if they run at start up when they are not needed. As mentioned in the maintenance document you do not need many programs besides your security software to start right away.

Programs you don't need starting at boot up:

Adobe Reader
Anything Google
Openoffice
Microsoft Office
Java updater
Bonjour (This really shouldn't be installed anyway since you are not supposed to have iTunes.)

You can safely deselect any of these in the Windows configuration utility. (Click run and then type msconfig.)

Keeping your computer safe:

Your anti-virus software should be set to update automatically. If it isn't you should be sure to update it at least once a day. (And definitely do it if you see the yellow warning flag on the AVG icon in the system tray. I've noticed that at a number of hi-rises I've been to.)

Never turn off your anti-virus or firewall programs.

Scan your computers for viruses and spyware weekly. The scan shouldn't take more than a half hour. (Generally. It can take longer depending on the number of files on the system.) You can still do other things on the computer while the scan is running. It may slow it down a little though. (The computer, not the scan.)

Spyware scanning is especially important. You can pick up adware and tracking cookies even if you just go to safe sites.

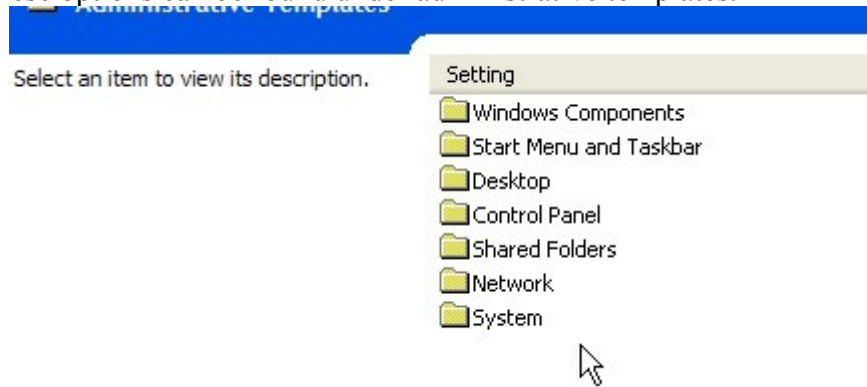
Controlling the computing environment:

You can prevent residents from making changes to the computers using the group policy editor.

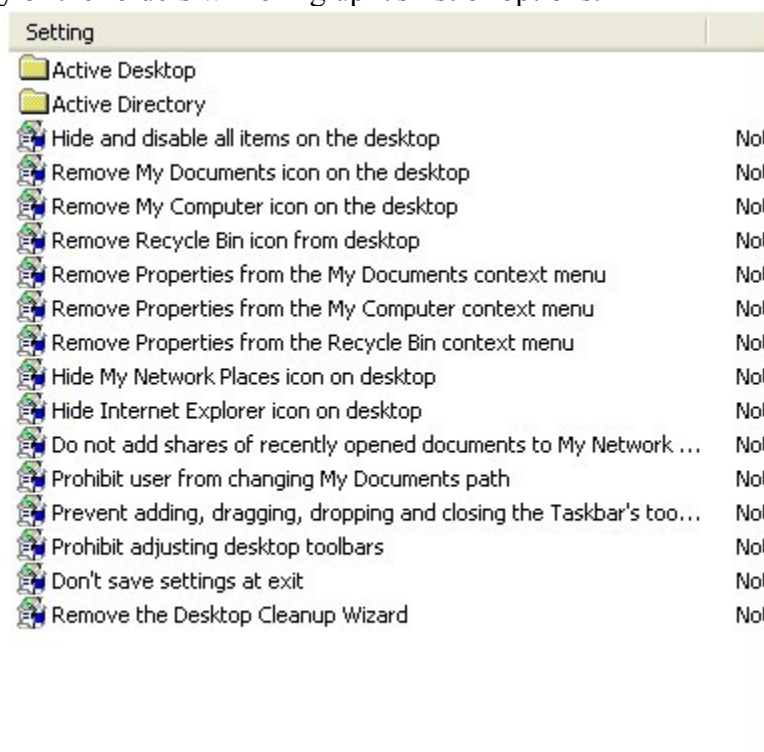
Some of the things you can do:

Keep users from accessing certain control panel applets.
Prevent the desktop wallpaper from being changed.
Prevent the taskbar from being changed or moved.
Prevent screen resolution and other display settings from being changed.
Keep users from saving files to the desktop.
Prevent adding or deleting desktop icons.
Add text to be viewed at logon.
And many more things like this.

The majority of these options can be found under administrative templates.

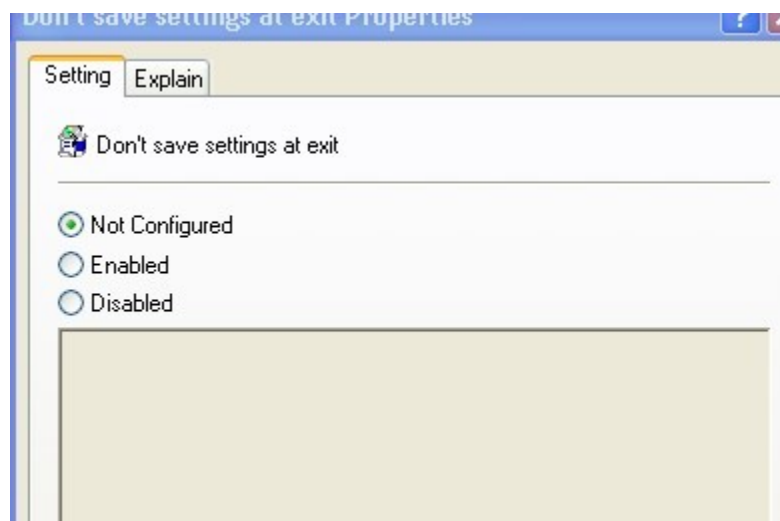


Double clicking on any of the folders will bring up its list of options.



This is the desktop folder.

- To choose an option double click on it.
- A box will pop up.
- You can enable or disable the option or read more information about it.



- The explain tab gives more information.
- Once you have made your choice click the okay button at the bottom of the window.
- If you're not sure of what something does you should definitely read the information provided.
- If you're still unsure how to proceed it is best to leave that setting be and not do anything with it.
- The group policy editor is a powerful tool but you need to be careful with it.