SAFE E-MAILING PRACTICES

We know that some uninformed Probians believe that they get Spam and other unwanted e-mails simply because their e-mail addresses might appear on the Probus website. This is an unwarranted assumption that has absolutely no basis in fact, as the e-mail addresses included on the Probus website are not hyperlinked and are of no interest to Spammers. The simple truth of the matter lies in the fact that most people practice **"UNSAFE E-MAILING"** and many don't spend a few dollars and employ Spam filters on their systems.

We've circulated this information before but think it's high time we get the message out there again.

This applies to ALL of us who send emails. So, **PLEASE** read the following, even if you're sure you already follow proper procedures.

Do you really know how to forward emails? 20% of us do; 80% **DO NOT**.

Do you ever wonder why you get viruses and/or junk mail?

Don't you hate it?

Every time you forward an email there is information left over from the people who got the message before you, namely their email addresses and names. As the messages get forwarded along, those lists of addresses continue to grow and all it takes is for some poor sap to get a virus, and his or her computer can send that virus to every email address that has come across his computer. Or, someone can take all of those addresses and sell them to a spammer so that he can send junk mail to them in the hopes that you will go to the site and he will make five cents for each hit. That's right, all of that inconvenience over a nickel. How do you stop it? Well, there are several easy steps. Try the following if you haven't done it before:

(1) When you **forward** an email, **DELETE** all of the other addresses that appear in the body of the message (at the top). That's right, **DELETE** them. Highlight them and delete them, backspace them, cut them, whatever it is you know how to do. It only takes a second. **You MUST click the 'Forward' button first** and then you will have full editing capabilities against the body and headers of the message. If you don't click on **'Forward'** first, you won't be able to edit the message at all.

(2) Whenever you send an email to more than one person, **DO NOT use the To: or Cc:** fields for adding email addresses. **Always use the BCC: (blind carbon copy)** field for listing the email addresses. This is the way the people you send to will only see their own email address. If you don't see your BCC option, click on where it says To: and your address list will appear. Highlight the address and choose **BCC:** and that's it, it's that easy. When you send to BCC: your message will automatically say **'Undisclosed Recipients'** or the principal addressee in the 'TO:' field of the people who receive it.

(3) **Remove any 'FW:'** in the subject line. You can re-name the subject if you wish or even fix spelling.

(4) **ALWAYS hit your Forward button from the actual email you are reading**. Do your ever get those emails where you have to open 10 pages to read the one page with the information on it? By forwarding from the actual page you wish someone to view, you stop them from having to open many e-mails just to see what you sent.

(5) Have you ever received an **email that is a petition?** It states a position and asks you to add your name and address and to forward it to 10 or 15 people or your entire address book. **The email can be forwarded on and on and can collect thousands of names and email addresses.**

A FACT: The completed petition is actually worth a couple of bucks to a professional Spammer because of the multitude of valid names and email addresses contained therein. **DO NOT put your email address on any petition.** If you want to support the petition, send it as your own personal letter to the intended recipient. Your position will carry more weight as a personal letter than a laundry list of names and email address on a petition. (And don't believe the ones that say that the email is being traced, it just isn't so!)

Some of the other emails to DELETE and NOT forward are:

1. The one that says something like, **'Send this email to 10 people** and you all see something great run across your screen.' Or sometimes they'll just tease you by saying 'something really cute will happen. 'IT ISN'T GOING TO HAPPEN!!!!! (We are still seeing some of the same emails that we waited on 10 years ago!)
2. Don't let the bad luck ones scare you either ; **delete them**, they're trash.

3. Before you forward an **'Amber Alert'**, or a **'Virus Alert'**, or some of the other emails floating around nowadays, **check them out before you forward them**. Most of them are junk mail that's been circling the net for YEARS! Just about everything you receive in an email that is in question can be checked out at **Snopes**. Just go to **www.snopes.com**. **It's really easy to find out if it's real or not. If it's not, please don't pass it on.**

4. **Before sending the email scroll down to the bottom and remove ALL the build up of 'Virus Protection Messages' and other advertising** that get tacked on each time an email gets forwarded. So please, in the future, let's stop the junk mail and the viruses.