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AppleShare Network: WDEF Infection and Remedy

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TOPIC -----

Our office has an AppleShare network with about 12 Macintosh nodes of varying configuration. The workstations are constantly going catatonic for about a minute at a time. They seem to be looking out onto the network for something (there's a network activity indicator under the Apple when this occurs), but all work is being done locally.

Almost any action can bring on the behavior. We're using a combination of LocalTalk and PhoneNet. Does this possibly sound like a problem with termination in the network cabling? I've used Inter•Poll to test performance, but can't locate any particular black hole on the net.

DISCUSSION -----

It sounds more like you're dealing with the WDEF virus. The virus tries to infect a mounted AppleShare volume but, because AppleShare doesn't use the Desktop file, everything comes to a halt while WDEF figures out what to do.

We suggest running a good anti-virus utility on all your Macintosh systems except the file server. Symantec's SAM version 1.5 or higher will catch WDEF. You will want to eradicate the virus from your server (you'll have to start up with a floppy), but you don't want to install an anti-virus INIT on it, so that it runs all the time. You really wouldn't be keeping the server clean, just slowing it down.

You can remove WDEF without an anti-virus utility by simply rebuilding the Desktops on every Macintosh on the network. But be aware that you probably have several infected floppy disks around, just waiting to reinfect your hard drives. Also, if you work at home, you should check those computers for infection.

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