

THE COMPUTER CORNER

No. 130. A Tip, CERT, and Foxit

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Here is a useful tip. Have you ever had a folder (directory) in which you wanted the items sorted a certain way? For example, here is a folder that contains shortcuts to my games:

GAMES, unsorted

I like to play these games in a certain order. However, by default, Windows sorts them left to right and top to bottom, based upon their names. **BA**ckgamn before **BL**oobs before **BO**ard Games and so on.

Now, these are all shortcuts to game programs, so it is a simple matter to right-click and rename them in a way that will keep them in any order I please. Simply precede each shortcut with a number. Now, when the GAMES folder is opened, the shortcuts are sorted based not on the name, but rather on the number. Take a look at the sorted shortcuts below, now sorted in the order that I prefer to play them. Note that I had 11 icons to deal with, so after 8, I used 90, 91 and 92 to create the sort order I wanted. Windows is foiled and the human wins! Another tip that may be even more useful to you: This ploy also works with sorting

names in your cell phone! Now you can sort your contacts in order of importance, rather than just by first or last name.

GAMES, sorted

Now let me switch gears, and put in a plug for some training. Are you sure you know what to do (for yourself and your own family) if a disaster strikes your area? A tornado? A flood? A nearby Hazardous Materials (HazMat) spill? Did you know you can **significantly** reduce the danger to yourself and your family by taking steps ahead of time that mitigate the danger? Did you know there is a free training program available that will outline these steps, as well as provide you with a free backpack containing some needed supplies and equipment to help you cope with disasters? Moreover, the training program teaches you how to become part of a disaster relief team if your own family and property are OK but your neighbors or co-workers need help. What do you need to invest? Not one penny – just some time. Typically, these training programs occupy two of your days. In my county, we hold 'em on a weekend, a Saturday and Sunday. Just finished a weekend training 14 persons (I

am an instructor in the program). What is the name of this program? CERT. Community Emergency Response Team.

Here is the logic. Following a major disaster, first responders (firefighters, police officers, emergency medical technicians, HazMat technicians) are **not** going to be able to reach all the folks that need their help. It may be hours or even days before that happens. Witness the pandemonium after Hurricane Katrina down south. The CERT program is aimed at training people to help themselves (and their families, neighbors and co-workers), until the professional first responders can get to them. You learn how to size-up the situation, how to turn off utilities to reduce danger from fire or electrical shock, how to suppress small fires, how CERT teams interact with ICS (used by the first responders when they get there), life-saving first aid steps, and so on. Each CERT course includes hands-on experience in

extinguishing small fires, triage operations, search-and-rescue operations including cribbing techniques to lift heavy objects, and so on. The course even includes training in understanding the psychological impact of a disaster on yourself and survivors.

CERT has been around and in use for over 20 years in some parts of the US, but for some reason, we here in Wisconsin are just getting started in it. You will probably hear more about it in your own area of the state, but if you don't soon, call your county Emergency Management department to inquire concerning when a course will be held. CERT is part of Homeland Security, and is funded through Wisconsin Emergency Management and down to the counties within Wisconsin.

Hey, thanks for letting me stray from computer topics, and thank you for reading this. Now, find out about CERT in your area. At the very least, it can help make you and your family safer.

Here is a hot new tool, pointed out to me by Nels Harvey, WA9JOB: Tired of using the slow, bloated Adobe Acrobat to read .pdf files? A slick new reader is available, free. Much better than Adobe! It needs no fancy installation (it takes up no Registry space, and if you ever want to dump it, you just erase the program). It is much, much smaller than Adobe, and it opens instantly. It will even let you type on the opened .pdf document (though the free version will put "Edited by Foxit ..." on the page when you save it). Will open .pdf files in your browser, too, just like Adobe.

Take my advice and replace Adobe. Do it in this order: 1. Uninstall Adobe Acrobat Reader, whatever version you have. 2. Download the free Foxit Reader from foxitsoftware.com. Run it and make sure that under Help, it is set to the default reader. Then make sure your browser has installed it as the default .pdf reader. To do this in Firefox, click Tools, Options, Download Actions – View and Edit Actions, and scroll down to PDF. Make sure Foxit is listed as the default reader. If it is not, click Change Action and add Foxit. It is worth your effort, if for nothing else, to recover five or six megabytes of space on your hard drive (don't forget to defrag after finishing). It is really great when a software group comes up with a slick new program and makes it free for us all. Thanks, Nels, for the tip! Happy computing!