

## No. 215: Is Windows 10 Spyware?

By Stan Kaplan, WB9RQR  
715 N Dries Street, Saukville 53080 (262) 268-1949  
wb9rqr@att.net

Yep, it most certainly is! Why?

Windows 10 collects and sends back to Microsoft a lot of stuff, and it does it without your permission. According to Timothy Weaver of Majorgeeks.com, your nickname as well as your full name, the names of people in your appointments list and information about them, and your recent calendar events are all sent to Microsoft without asking permission of you, the owner of the machine. Moreover, just about everything you record through Cortana will be sent back to Microsoft, and this is a default setting when you install Win10. By every definition of the word, that is spyware. But there is more.

It uses your personal bandwidth to update the PCs of other persons (being fair, it also uses their bandwidth to update your machine), but it does not tell you about this or make it easy to turn it off. You can attempt to slow down the pouring out of personal data from your machine by simply disabling data sharing, Bing searches and Cortana, but that will not fix the problem. Windows 10 will still send information back to Microsoft. While it won't actually share your networks by default, it will share your wireless password with your friends, by default. It will scan your machine for counterfeit games or unauthorized peripheral hardware devices. Big brother is really watching you closely! We have entered a new era in the raiding of personal data by Microsoft.

So, what can you do? There are a number of small, free programs out there that will stem the flow of your information. The easiest way to look at them is to go to majorgeeks.com, System Tools, Window10 Fixes, and you will find a list of free programs that will turn off the flow. Click any one of them for a description. You will also be presented with a video authored by majorgeeks called WHICH WINDOWS 10 PRIVACY TOOL IS RIGHT FOR ME? Watch this 5-minute video to see a summary of a few of the programs.

The program I personally prefer (because it is simple, safe and can be reversed) is Spybot Anti-Beacon. Install it (or a different program of your preference) and you should have plugged the leak of your personal information. At least much of it. Or dump Windows 10 and opt for Linux. Happy Computing!