

## Re: Newbie Firewalls?

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"Lazy Senior" <spamno\_lazysenior@mchsi.com> wrote in message news:<pI8qb.112717\$Tr4.315972@attbi\_s03>...

> *I recently got cable internet a few days ago. The installer told me to get a better firewall than the one in Win XP which is my operating system.*

Glad to hear the installer said that. At least they are taking some steps to protect their users.

> *I*

> *downloaded 3 trial versions of firewalls. Zone Alarm Pro 4 , Black Ice, and*

> *Kerio.*

I have used ZA and Kerio free editions. I prefer Kerio, but that's a personal decision.

> *Both ZAP and Kerio seem intrusive to me*

> *(especially ZAP) and ask me questions that I dont know how to answer...Black*

> *Ice on the other hand hasnt asked me anything, which*

> *makes me wonder if it is really effective protecting me?*

Personally, I have found that putting up with the questions at the onset allows me to tailor the rules on the fly. After a short time, the number of questions drops.

You don't really need a college course, but if you think of your computer like a car, it really helps to know some of the basics, like what warning lights you have and what they mean. In this way, your firewall is an interactive warning light, and it should allow you to define how to react in similar situations.

When a dialog box appears telling you that some program is trying to access the internet, you need to understand what that program is. Sometimes it's benign, like your browser or email client (for several values of benign), or it could be a less desirable program trying to report your activities like Gator and similar apps.

You can also access the logs for your firewall and, by following the

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help files or posting your questions in a relevant newsgroup (of which this is one), determine what is or is not being detected or prevented.

- > *I dont have [a router], my Motorola Sb 5100*
- > *is connected directly to my ethernet card. I have only one computer.*

You are probably okay with just a software firewall, but you need to take precautions against running malicious attachments and defeating the firewall. A hardware firewall will continue to protect you from external attacks, and those with hubs can offer multiple connections when you find the need.

Personally, I used an older computer with two ethernet cards and