

Tip for November 2008
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Many computers , even 2 years old, are starting to experience problems due to dust build up. Even in the cleanest of houses there is dust in the air, so don't feel it is a reflection of your housekeeping.

In order to keep computer insides cool, they have a number of fans blowing into the case. One important fan is blowing air onto the CPU (processor/brain). There are often thin bits of metal to get heat out and get more air. These thin bits of metal (fins or heat sink) are also good at collecting dust form the air that is blown onto them. Once the dust starts to clog up these fins, the air doesn't move as well and the fan has to blow more air and dust.

If this dust is not removed, then your computer overheats. This usually means a new motherboard (electric circuit board), new CPU and new memory and even a new power supply and hard drive. You did back up those precious photos and documents, didn't you?

Getting new hardware is easy – apart form the damage to the hip pocket, but getting those photos back from a dead hard drive is often impossible.

Don't open up your case and use a vacuum cleaner to remove the dust - it may rip electronics off the motherboard and kill it too. Get a professional tool to remove dust every two years, gently.

One of my clients experienced a problem that was new to us the other day. He could access his email, but not browse the internet. He had inadvertently downloaded a browser help that wasn't. It is called Cool Web Search and stops you from browsing the internet even though you have access to it. Once we removed My Web Search he was again cooking with gas.

An addendum to Things that go bump in the night...

There is a new nasty similar to the XP antivirus that I talked about last month. It is called Advanced Antivirus, so be warned.

Cheers,
Deirdree