

# Techie Times

Volume 2, Issue 10

Glenwood Community School District

May 2008

## General Cleaning Tips

Below is a listing of general tips that should be taken when cleaning any of the components or peripherals of a computer as well as tips to help keep a computer clean.

- **Never** spray or squirt any type of liquid onto any computer component. If a spray is needed, spray the liquid onto a cloth and then use that cloth to rub down the component.
- You can use a small vacuum to suck up dirt, dust, or hair around their computer on the outside case and on their keyboards.
- When cleaning a component and/or the computer, turn it off before cleaning.
- Never get any component inside the computer wet.
- Be cautious when using any type of cleaning solvents; some solvents can damage the case. Try to always use water first.
- When cleaning, be careful not to accidentally adjust any knobs or controls. In addition, when cleaning the back of the computer make sure not to disconnect any of the plugs.
- When cleaning fans, especially the smaller fans within a portable computer or laptop it's suggested that you either hold the fan or place something in-between the fan blades to prevent it from spinning. Spraying compressed air into a fan or cleaning a fan with a vacuum may cause damage to some fans or in some cases cause back voltage.
- Never eat or drink around the computer.

## Cleaning Materials

Although many companies have created products to help improve the process of cleaning your computer and peripherals, users can also use household items to clean their computers and peripherals. Below is a listing of items you may need or want to use while cleaning your computer or computer peripherals.

- **Cloth** - A cloth is the best tool used when rubbing down a component; although paper towels can be used with most hardware, a cloth is recommended whenever possible.
- **Water or rubbing alcohol** - When moistening a cloth, it is best to use water or diluted rubbing alcohol\*. Other solvents may be bad for the plastics used with your computer.
- **Portable Vacuum** - Sucking the dust, dirt, hair, cigarette particles, and other particles out of a computer can be one of the best methods of cleaning a computer. Over time, these items can restrict the airflow in a computer and cause circuitry to corrode. Do not use a standard vacuum as it can generate a lot of static electricity that can damage your computer.
- **Cotton swabs** - Cotton swabs moistened with rubbing alcohol or water are excellent tools for wiping hard to reach areas in your keyboard, mouse, and other locations.
- **Foam swabs** - Whenever possible, it is better to use lint-free swabs such as foam swabs.

\* Diluted Rubbing Alcohol is 50% or less alcohol. You can mix equal parts of water with alcohol to dilute it to this strength.

## Cleaning Keyboards

Many people clean the keyboard by turning it upside down and shaking. A more effective method is to use compressed air. Compressed air is pressurized air contained in a can with a very long nozzle. Simply aim the air between the keys and blow away all of the dust and debris that has gathered there. A vacuum cleaner can also be used, but make sure the keyboard doesn't have loose "pop off" keys that could possibly be sucked up by the vacuum.

## Cleaning Flat Screen Monitors

Unlike a computer monitor, the LCD or flat-panel display is not made of glass; therefore it requires special cleaning procedures.

When cleaning the LCD screen it is important to remember to not spray any liquids onto the LCD directly; do not use a paper towel as it may cause the LCD to become scratched.

To clean the LCD screen we recommend that you use a soft cotton cloth; if a dry cloth does not completely clean the screen, you can apply diluted rubbing alcohol\* to the cloth and wipe the screen with the damp cloth. Rubbing alcohol is actually used to clean the LCD before it leaves the factory.

## Check It Out!

All tech newsletters are stored on the GCSD tech webpage. Check it out at:

<http://tech.glenwoodschoools.org>