

CKCS Disc Erasing Service

CKCS is announcing another benefit of membership: A service to erase data files from disk drives being prepared for disposal or donation.

Why?

If you have a computer that you want to dispose of or donate, a common worry is that data left on your disk drive may be read and misused by someone who handles your old computer. There have been many cases in the news of this very issue.

What to do?

Deleting all files can be a little difficult to do and may not be effective since restoring deleted files is fairly simple in some situations. A more thorough erase of the disk drive is advised but also not always easy to do.

CKCS has acquired a device that connects directly to a disk drive and erases every sector of the drive replacing old data with a fixed data pattern. It is also very fast.

This process erases all files, including Windows and applications.

This effectively removes the possibility that a general user could recover old data files using common tools. However, if you are in trouble with the FBI or the CIA, do not count on this service to erase files beyond their ability to recover.

How do you take advantage of this CKCS service?

Bring your disk drive to the CKCS Resource Center on any weekday between 10AM and 4PM or on the first Saturday of the month to the Dr Fixit SIG meeting. It helps if you can remove the disk drive from the computer and just bring the drive. But, if you need help with that, bring the cabinet or the laptop and we will try to do it for you.

Once the drive is accessible we can connect to it and run the erase procedure. In most cases the whole process takes less than one hour. If there is a backlog we may not be able to complete the erasing until the following week. You may leave the drive and we will call when it is ready.

Erasing will usually be done on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday mornings.

Does this always work successfully?

No. While it has been successful in nearly all our practice attempts, we have discovered a few cases where the eraser device did not work as expected and we don't know why. You must be prepared for disappointment.

So far we have not discovered any case where the device appeared to work correctly but left data on the disk. All failures have been recognizable.

If you would like to volunteer to help with this service or if you have any questions, call Wendell Curtis, Mike Seiler or Bob Brown at 373-1000.