

Computer users get help creating 'good' HLAN passwords

Guidelines for creating your HLAN password

- Use at least eight and not more than 14 non-blank characters.
- Use a combination of letters, numbers, and at least one special character within the first seven characters. A special character is one that can be typed on the keyboard, is visible when typed and is not a number or letter.

The list includes: ~!@#\$%^&* ()-_=+[{]};:'",< .>/?

- Don't use a number for the first or last character.
- Don't use personal information such as names, nicknames, birthdays, or HLAN ID numbers.
- Don't use any word that is found in the dictionary for any language.
- If you have a password for a classified system, make sure this one is different.

Standard computer-security practices require that networks and information systems have and use a password method to confirm the identity of each person accessing the system. Whenever possible, passwords for access to computer resources at the Hanford Site are required to satisfy the security guidelines, which are listed here (see sidebar) and are discussed in HNF-RD-11626.

Until now, users have been primarily responsible for making sure their own passwords satisfy these guidelines, with little assistance provided by the system.

To improve the security of the Hanford Local Area Network and help users better apply the password guidelines, new network software will be installed on Tuesday, July 1. Once activated, the new software will help users create correctly formatted passwords. Users will notice the new "help" feature the next time the network asks for their passwords to be updated (every six months).

Recent studies indicate that potential intruders value a password far more than the single computer it's protecting. A hacker who can get the password from a server or personal computer can use that password to gain access to other computers on the network, bypassing all the high-tech security installed to keep them out. In fact, some viruses and worms send an infected computer's password file back to the creator.

For information on the correct construction of passwords, contact Computer Technical Services at 376-1234 or refer to the article "Network Passwords" on Hanford User Help (HUH) at this Web site: <http://apweb02.rl.gov/huh/display.cfm?id=244&back=index+for+n>.

An excellent way to create a secure password that's easy to remember is to start with a word, and then change some of its letters or intersperse it with numbers and special characters. For example, if the starting word is "spangled," the following passwords based on this word satisfy the security guidelines for passwords: **Sp&9gle.**; **\$5a#gl3d**; and **Sp_a-n6l*d**.

Another way to construct an easily remembered password is to start with the first letters of the words in a song, poem or book. For example, using the first line of our national anthem, "Oh, say can you see, by the dawn's early light" gives oscysbtdeI as the starting point for the following secure passwords: **O\$cysb2d2I**; **%7cys[tde!**; and **Qsc4\$,btd=I**.

If you have questions about the construction of network passwords, contact CTS. Note that you will be unable to use any of the passwords given as examples above. ■