

## Empty the Trash

Presented by: WIU's Chief Technology Security Officer

In the process of scanning university computers for sensitive data we have found sensitive data in the Recycle Bins on over 180 university computers. We believe that the majority of the users of these computers intended to dispose of, or delete, these files and therefore had no idea they still had sensitive data on them. Windows users may think that by deleting a file or directory that it's gone from our computer. However, Windows only moves deleted files into the computer's Recycle Bin and to fully delete the files you must "empty" the Recycle Bin ([Click here](#) for directions on emptying your computer's Recycle Bin).

However, we realize that it will take some time to change our habits. In order to better protect the confidentiality of data under our care and in accordance with university policy (see [SSN policy](#)); uTech will be undertaking the regular systematic cleaning or emptying of Recycle Bins on university computers. This effort will not touch any other files on a computer, but will erase or delete all files in the Recycle Bin. Therefore only files that you intend to delete or dispose of should be placed in the Recycle Bin. In addition we encourage you to still get into the habit of not only "throwing" unwanted files into the "Recycle Bin" but also "emptying the Recycle Bin" before you shut down your computer.

Thank you!

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"Let us not look back in anger or forward in fear, but around in awareness." - James Thurber