



Microsoft Windows AntiSpyware Software

Spyware has become a worldwide epidemic and at SOU we are battling its effects daily. If you have contracted spyware you may experience slow PC performance, annoying pop-up ads, unwanted changes to Internet settings, and unauthorized use of your private information. The Information Technology Department is combating this nuisance by deploying the Microsoft Windows AntiSpyware Software to all SOU computers running Windows XP. This article will explain and help you take advantage of its features.

Real-time Protection

The Microsoft Windows AntiSpyware software provides real-time protection while you're surfing the Web or downloading and installing new programs. It monitors your computer and warns you when you might be installing spyware or other unwanted software (referred to as "threats").

If Microsoft Windows AntiSpyware requires your attention, a Security Agent will prompt you for action, and an alert window will appear in the bottom right corner of your display.

The warnings and alerts are explained below:

- **Green – Safe** This is usually an informative message to let you know that a program or change has been "Allowed." No action is required on your part.

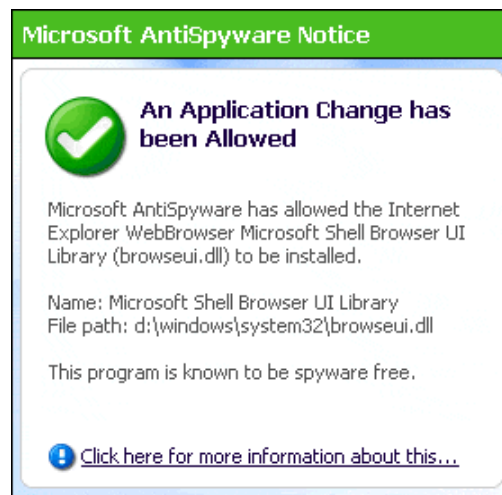


Figure 1. Example of a safe change notice

- **Blue – Suspicious** Indicates that a program is attempting to install an additional toolbar or add itself to your startup registry so that it will start up and run in the background every time you start your computer. Keep in mind that these startup programs will use system resources and slow down the performance of your computer. You may elect to block or allow these items depending on your needs.

If you recognize the program name, or if you are confident that some action you performed (such as an install or download) resulted in the message, then it should be safe to select “Allow”. If you are unsure, it is safer to select “Block”.

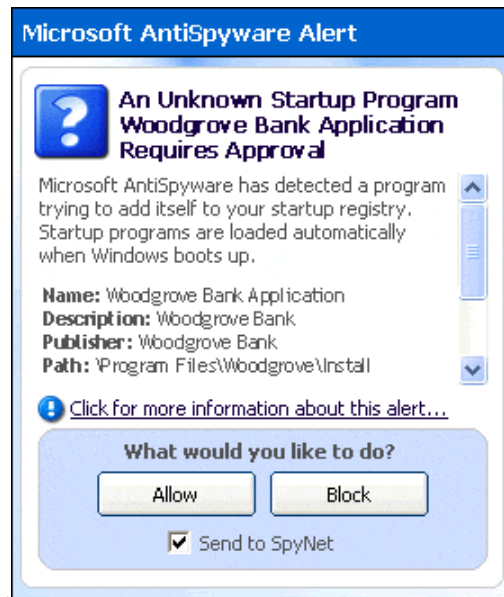


Figure 2. Example of a suspicious change notice

- **Red – Alert** Under most circumstances a red alert should be removed. Only allow this event when you are sure of its purpose.

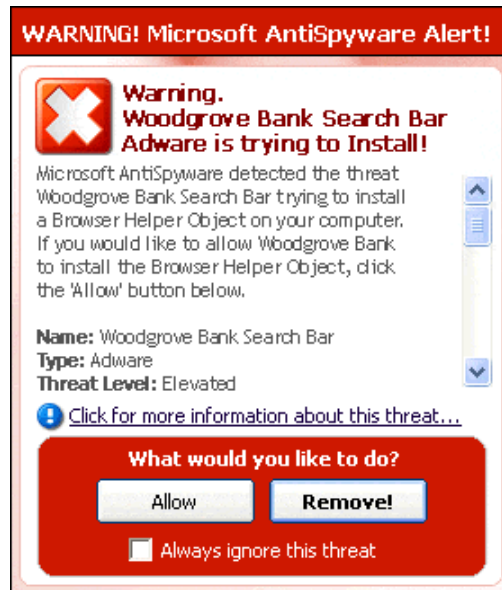


Figure 3. Example of an alert

- **Gold – Successful Blocking Notice** Read the information in one of the previous warnings and then choose whether you'd like to **Allow** or **Block** the operation. When the program has been successfully blocked, you will see a notice, such as the one in Figure 4.

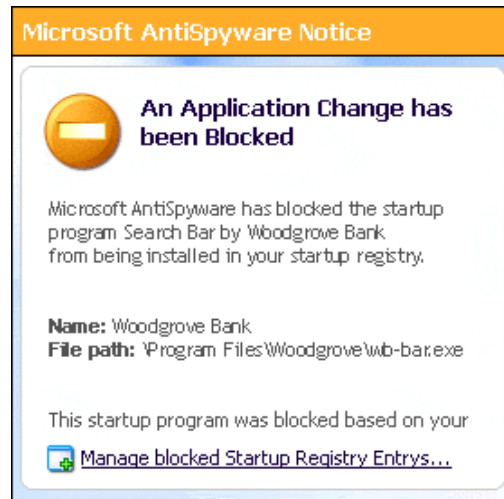


Figure 4. Example of a successful blocking notice

This article is a basic introduction to the operation of this program. There are a number of other great features including advanced tools (including system explorers, browser restore, and tracks eraser), manual and automatic Scans and updates. All of these are described in detail in the help menu and at <http://www.microsoft.com/>. From here, click on the **Windows AntiSpyware (Beta)** link.