



## **HELP ME, DOC!!**

John Bryant  
Arizona Computer Consultant  
(602) 861-1738

### **BUGBEAR VIRUS ALERT! An Immediate and Vicious Danger**

Imagine a threat that comes from a friend, destroys your defenses, gives your secrets to an enemy and then uses you as a weapon against those close to you. The Bugbear virus is all that and more. Experts estimate that Bugbear has already infected over a million computers in its first few days – and shows no sign of slowing down.

Like Klez, Bugbear is a virus worm that comes as an inviting attachment – often looking like it arrived from a friend or associate. Both hide their originator by changing the "From" line on the infected emails. This deception (called "spoofing") makes it difficult to locate the email source. Both have a fine-tuned ability to replicate and distribute themselves to unsuspecting victims from a single infected computer.

Klez's overall damage potential pales when compared to Bugbear's payload. Its first priority is to destroy your programs – particularly your virus scanner and firewall. Next, it leaves your computer wide open to hackers and begins recording your passwords, usernames and other personal information. During the brief moments that it takes for this virus to invade your privacy and lay your system bare to the dark side of the Web, it eagerly collects email addresses and sends itself out to anyone unfortunate enough to have sent you an email.

#### **How To Defend Yourself**

Once again, education and constant alertness are your primary defenses against viral attacks. Now, more than ever, the cardinal rules of virus safety apply:

***Virus scanners are only as effective as they are up to date.  
If you haven't updated, you aren't protected.***

The first thing this infection attacks is your virus scanner. If it is not up to date, it will be destroyed. Updates are free – don't ignore them.

***Don't open unexpected email attachments – ever!  
If you don't know what it is, send it back and ask the sender.***

This mutant piece of code can get through your safety devices only because you let it in! Don't assume that the file is OK because it was sent by a friend.

#### **Stay Informed and Spread the News**

The news on Bugbear is not good, and all early indications show that it's only going to get worse as it spreads more widely across the Web. Keep yourself and your friends protected and informed at the Virus Information Center at [www.helpmedoc.com](http://www.helpmedoc.com). If you or a friend fear that you've already contracted the Bugbear or Klez virus, call me at (602) 861-1738 for immediate assistance.