Entered on 05/20/2011 at 10:47:32 MDT (GMT-0600)

QUESTION

How do I know that my files and data are being backed up?

SOLUTION

No backup scheme is perfect. Your data files may change more often than they are backed up. Restoring lost files can take longer than you can afford to wait. Backups may unexpectedly fail entirely. *Your best strategy is to be responsible for your own data. Make your own frequent backups. Do not make the campus backup system your primary safety net. Treat the campus backup as a last-resort disaster-recovery system.*

That said, if your files are physically located on a CCIT-managed server or network drive they are archived regularly by CCIT. Therefore, if you log into computer-laboratory computers with your ADIT credentials (Windows), and store your files on your personal Y: or Z: drives, they *are* backed up. If you log into Linux computer-laboratory computers with your MultiPass credentials, your files reside on a server that CCIT backs up.

If you are at all unsure, ask a Computer Commons (CT156) consultant whether your files are stored on a drive that is backed up. Or submit your questions to Mines Help Center (http://helpdesk.mines.edu).

Your best defense against data loss is to store duplicate data in at least two places. If the data files are critical, or would require much time and effort to replace -- for example, a thesis or dissertation -- then keep at least one backup copy at another physical location to protect against fire, theft, and other catastrophic threats.

You can archive your own important data locally if you have a CD or DVD writer, flash drive, or an external hard drive (floppy disks are not reliable and are not recommended). You can also copy your data over the network to another computer, or even to a computer at home. Be certain that your data files exist in more than one location.

If you would like help formulating a strategy for your own local backups, please submit a request for assistance via the Mines Help Center (http://helpdesk.mines.edu).

NOTES

Obviously, if you store data on a local hard drive -- such as your own personal computer -- your data are almost certainly *not* being backed up by CCIT. In fact, when it comes to Mines computer labs, local "scratch" directories on lab machines are generally wiped on a daily basis. Again, if information is important to you in any way, make a backup copy (or two) for yourself, on your own media, and store the copies securely.

AUTHOR

**/SG