UPS not the shipping service

Last week I talked about the perils of not having a good surge protector. In fact I'm sure that most of you already knew the potential consequences of not having a good surge protector and believe that you are currently well protected. Just remember, if your surge protector is more then 3 years old then it is probably time to replace it because they do wear out. For those of you that fit in this category I suggest you get a battery backup known as a UPS. In the computer world UPS stands for Uninterruptible Power Source.

Why get a UPS? Good question; many people don't realize that a computer can be damaged from low power just as easily as it can be damaged from high power. Typical voltage coming from your electrical outlet is 110 volts. Power supplies for computers can work at a range of voltages from about 90 to 130 volts. Damage can result to the power supply if the line voltage goes above or below these limits. When the line voltage goes over 130 volts the condition is know as a power surge. If the power goes below 90 volts the condition is known as a brown out. When a computer connected to a UPS experiences one of these two conditions the UPS will automatically transfer to battery operated mode hence preserving the life of your power supply.

Another potential hazard to your computer would be total lose of power. If for some reason you are working on your computer and then suddenly the power goes out a UPS can keep your computer powered up and working for fifteen minutes or more. This can be especially helpful if you are in the middle of a computer project that hadn't been saved for a while. A computer equipped with a UPS can switch to battery mode without losing any information. If the power doesn't switch back on in a few minute then you have plenty of time to save your data and then power your system down safely.

Powering your system down safely brings us to the last reason to have a battery backup. Most of you know that to turn your computer off you have to go to the "Start" button and then choose "Shut Down." Your computer then goes through a series of shut down phases that safely powers your computer off including parking the heads of the hard drive. This step is especially important because physical damage can occur to your hard drive making it likely that you will loose data. When the power suddenly cuts off to your computer the heads inside the hard drive will suddenly "crash" onto the platters of the drive. Your data is stored on these platters and data lose, not to mention drive failure is possible if the platters are damaged. Having a UPS connected to your system can automatically shut your system down safely even if you're not home when the power goes out.

Battery backups can be found in a range of prices starting at around $50 and up. I prefer the APC brand of battery backups. We stock a 650va UPS that also includes surge protection for cable TV and Cat 5 Network cables. This size works well for most computers, although if you would like to talk about other UPS possibilities feel free to contact the experts at Computer Depot. Thomas, Roger or Scott can be contacted at 947-0749.