



Issued 5/22/17

Windows Defender Not Enough to Block WannaCry on Windows 7

Microsoft revealed on May 12 when it published an emergency Windows XP patch to block WannaCry ransomware that it also updated Windows Defender to detect the infection, and naturally, many users thought that simply running the security product is enough to remain protected.

Only that this might not be entirely true, especially in the case of Windows 7 where Windows Defender is not a fully-featured antivirus product, but only an anti-spyware solution. Specifically, Windows Defender evolved from anti-spyware to antivirus when Microsoft rolled out Windows 8, and this means that in Windows 7, it does not feature the typical antivirus features, like real-time protection. As a result, Windows 7 users who want an antivirus solution can go either for Microsoft's own Security Essentials or install a third-party antivirus product, as most of them have already been updated to block WannaCry. As CW notes, Windows 7 users who want to detect WannaCry cannot rely just on Windows Defender because a fully-featured antivirus is needed. On a clean computer, however, Windows users can block a WannaCry ransomware infection by simply updating their systems to the latest version using the patches that Microsoft already shipped. For Windows Vista, Windows 7, Windows 8.1, and Windows 10, users have to install the Patch Tuesday updates rolled out in March this year, while Windows XP and Windows Server 2003 need to deploy this emergency patch that was published by the company earlier this month.