Burn-It Version 1.0a, released 10/93

About Burn-It

No data security system would be complete without a way to destroy the original versions of a file after they are encrypted. Burn-It provides exactly that function. It is a drag-and-drop application under system 7. Files dragged onto the icon will first be overwritten with zeros, then renamed, then deleted. Both data and resource forks are deleted. Pre System 7 users can also access Burn-Its capabilities, just not quite so conveniently from the menus.

This is a simple application, nothing fancy. The only option allows you to select whether the computer should confirm destructions before they are carried out.

This application is not a replacement for the trash can. You should continue to drag unimportant documents and applications to the trash can. When you drag a file to the Burn-It icon it will be irretrievably deleted.

What's new in version 1.0a

Version 1.0a is an extremely minor upgrade of the original. It has been recompiled using Symantec's Think C version 6.0, the icon has been much improved and some minor documenation changes have been made.

How to Destroy a File

If you are a user of System 7.0 or later, you can use the drag and drop method of file selection which I highly recommend. To destroy a file simply drag the desired files to the Burn-It icon and release the mouse button. The file will be overwritten and deleted. If the *Confirm Before Delete* option has been selected you will be requested to confirm the destruction before it occurs.

Pre system 7.0 users can destroy a file by double clicking on the Burn-It application and then selecting "Delete..." from the file menu. You will be prompted to select a file for destruction.

The Options Menu

The options menu of Burn-It allows you to customize the behavior of Burn-It to suit how you use it. An option is active only if there is a check mark next to it in the Options menu. Below each option is described in detail.

For version 1.0a there is only one option Confirm Before Delete. This option if selected will ask you before it destroys each file.   This will give you one last chance to change your mind. Personal experience suggests it is a good idea to keep this option checked or accidents will happen.

Saving Options

Under the file menu there is a selection called "Save Options". This will save your option information so that it will be used the next time the program is run. For people using intense virus checking software: The options are saved in a resource called OPTN (I hate preference files proliferating on my disk). Therefore your virus checking software needs to allow Enigma to update its own resources (no one else!). Disinfectant doesn't complain but I suspect Gatekeeper might.

Limitations

There are a couple of things you need to be aware of using this <u>or any</u> file destruction utility.

The first issue concerns file names. Burn-It does its best to destroy file name as well as the data, but certain system extensions and inits will prevent this. Norton Utilities file saver for instance. No file saver I know of can prevent Burn-It from destroying the files contents, but they might allow recovery of the filename. Your best bet if this is a concern is to try whatever undelete utility you have. If the utility recovers the file name then you know this is an issue for you. If not then you have no problems. (Note that even if an undelete utility "recovers" a file, all that will be in it will be zeros.)

Secondly you should be concerned if you have a file which frequently grows and shrinks in size (maybe a database file for instance.) There is no way for an application like Burn-It to know that some disk blocks used to be allocated to the file if it shrinks. This is not just a Burn-It problem, it applies equally to all file destruction programs available. Burn-It destroys data from the start of the file to the logical end of file.

Do not be unduly concerned by these limits. I want to make sure users are aware of them, but the vast majority of normal usage will never trigger the conditions under which these problems can occur.

Burn-It can not destroy locked files, or files on locked or write protected volumes. Nor can it destroy files that are in use. In such cases you will get an appropriate error message.

Unrelated to security, Burn-It can only destroy files and applications. It can not and will not let you try to destroy folders and disks. If you need to do this select all the files and drag them to the Burn-It icon. If Enigma sells well I might be inspired to fix this problem :).

Accidently Deleted a File instead of Burning It?

Don't panic if this happens. If you can use an undelete utility to recover the file and then burn it properly. If you don't have an undelete utility then you still need not panic too much. Free disk sectors are fairly quickly reused by the system. Also you could always fill up the disk with copies of an innocent file.

User Support

I provide full support for Burn-It. Don't hesitate to send mail with questions, bug reports or suggestions. I want this program to be the best there is, and I want you to be a satisfied user.

Notes:

This program is compatible with ANY macintosh running ANY version of the system. If you encounter compatibility problems please let me know. Well Ok, it won't run on machines with 64K ROMs but if you have one of those BUY A NEW MAC! [If there are still users with the old 64K ROMs send me some mail, I can probably hack up a version that will work on your machines.] It will run on an Mac 512KE and it will run on a Quadra (it's a little faster on the Quadra though). Please let me know if you suspect or discover any incompatibilities.

Standard Disclaimer

I am not responsible for any loss or damage due to any failure of this program regardless of the cause.

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