6.12.8 Credential Management Facts

It's not uncommon for an organization's network to evolve over time to include many disparate systems that use their own exclusive authentication mechanisms. In this situation, end users must remember several sets of authentication credentials to access the services on these systems. The danger associated with this situation is that users may begin to write down passwords or save them in a file, which represents a significant security risk.

To prevent this from happening, consider using a credential management system. A *credential management system* securely stores a user's authentication credentials for multiple systems, including servers and websites.

Use the following tools to manage authentication credentials:

Operating System	Authentication Management Tool
Windows	On Windows hosts, you can use Credential Manager to manage authentication credentials. Credential Manager stores account credentials for network resources, such as file servers and websites. Credential Manager: ■ Saves authentication credentials in the Windows Vault ■ Uses saved account credentials when the user accesses a particular network resource ■ Stores account credentials from Windows Explorer, Internet Explorer, or the Remote Desktop client ■ Allows account credentials to be added to the vault using one of the following methods: 　▪ The **Remember My Credentials** link in the Windows Security dialog allows the credentials to be added when accessing the resource. 　▪ The **Add a Windows credential** link allows the credentials to be added without accessing the resource. When using this option, the internet or network address of the resource must be entered. ■ Allows saved credentials to be edited or deleted ■ Does not display passwords for saved credentials Within Credential Manager, use the **Back up Credentials** and **Restore Credentials** links to: ■ Back up and restore credentials)Secure Desktop requires Ctrl + Alt + Del to be pressed in order to enter the backup password) ■ Transfer credentials between computers Credential Manager does not store certificates used by the Encrypting File System (EFS).
Linux	There are a variety of credential management systems available for Linux systems. One commonly used package is KWalletManager, which stores account credentials for network resources, such as file servers and websites. KWalletManager: ■ Saves the account credentials in a secure "wallet." ■ Stores authentication credentials used to connect to network servers as well as secure websites. ■ Uses saved account credentials when the user accesses a particular network resource. ■ Offers two encryption options for protecting credentials stored in the wallet: 　▪ Blowfish 　▪ GPG ■ Does not display passwords for saved credentials. ■ Uses KDE Wallet Manager application to add, remove, or modify saved credentials. KDE Wallet Manager can also back up the contents of the wallet by exporting it to an encrypted .kwl file.