

- » **You may have to wait for shared resources.** Just because Bart sends something to Homer's printer doesn't mean that it immediately starts to print. Lisa may have sent a two-hour print job before that. Bart will just have to wait.
- » **You may have to wait for access to documents.** You may try to retrieve an Excel spreadsheet file from a network drive, only to discover that someone else is using it. Like Bart, you just have to wait.
- » **You don't have unlimited storage space.** If you copy a 100GB video file to a server's drive, you may get calls later from angry co-workers complaining that no room is left on the server's drive for their important files.
- » **Your files can become infected from viruses given to you by someone over the network.** You may then accidentally infect other network users.
- » **You have to be careful about saving sensitive files on the server.** If you write an angry note about your boss and save it on the server's hard drive, your boss may find the memo and read it.
- » **The server computer must be up and running at all times.** For example, if you turn Homer's computer into a server computer, Homer can't turn his computer off when he's out of the office. If he does, you can't access the files stored on his computer.
- » **If your computer is a server, you can't just turn it off when you're finished using it.** Someone else may be accessing a file on your hard drive or printing on your printer.

## The Network Administrator

Because so much can go wrong — even with a simple network — designating one person as network administrator is important. This way, someone is responsible for making sure that the network doesn't fall apart or get out of control.

The network administrator doesn't have to be a technical genius. In fact, some of the best network administrators are complete idiots when it comes to technical stuff. What's important is that the administrator is organized. That person's job is to make sure that plenty of space is available on the file server, that the file server is backed up regularly, and that new employees can access the network, among other tasks.

The network administrator's job also includes solving basic problems that the users themselves can't solve — and knowing when to call in an expert when