Case Study: **Computer Crime**

USPA & IRA Company

A former programmer in Fort Worth, Texas, has been convicted of planting a computer virus in his employer's system that wiped out 168,000 records and was activated like a time bomb, doing its damage two days after he was fired. Tarrant County Assistant District Attorney Davis McCown said he believes he is the first prosecutor in the country to convict someone for destroying computer records using a virus. Donald Gene Burleson, 40, was convicted of Charges of harmful access to a computer, a third-degree felony that carries up to 10 years in prison and up to $5,000 in fines. Burleson planted the virus in revenge for its firing from an insurance company, McCown said.

Jurors were told during a technical and sometimes complicated three week trial that Burleson planted a rogue program in the computer system used to store records at USPA and IRA Co., a Fort Worth based insurance and brokerage firm. The virus, McCown said, was activated two days after a Burleson had been fired because of personality conflicts with other employees. "There were a series of programs built into the system as early as Labor Day," McCown said. Once he got fired, those programs went off. The virus was discovered two days later, after it had eliminated 168,000 payroll records, holding up company paychecks for more than a month.

On the basis of the above case study, answer the following questions:
a) What do you conclude from the above passage? Describe in context with society.
b) What are the ethical and legal issues involved with it?
c) Suggest the way the crime could have been stopped.