

# Re: Disappearing HOSTS file XP Pro SP2

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[http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.network\\_web/2008-03/msg00060.html](http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.network_web/2008-03/msg00060.html)

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- *From:* John Wunderlich <[jwunderlich@xxxxxxxx](mailto:jwunderlich@xxxxxxxx)>
  - *Date:* Wed, 05 Mar 2008 16:42:01 GMT
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=?Utf-8?B?am9ubnliZWU=?= <[jonnybee@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:jonnybee@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)> wrote  
in <news:C55BBD09-9273-4D60-9205-F4F4235DFBAF@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>:

Hi All –

I do web development, and I use the HOSTS files on our local machines to access test servers that don't have 'public' DNS names and for virtual servers on the local loop so we don't have to publish over the 'net to our own IIS6 servers.

It works brilliantly. HOWEVER – I have one machine that just won't let me create/edit a HOSTS file. Well, it will let me create it, and then it will just wink out of existence right before your eyes.

This box is running XP Pro 32 with SP2 installed & is up-to-date on hotfixes/patches.

This is the only machine I am having this problem with AFAIK. I have 4 others where this is not the case. 2 with XP Pro and 2 with Media Center.

I'm not sure when the problem began to be honest because machines are tasked differently. I noticed when I started publishing to a new virtual server – WOW – that was slow... of course I'm publishing to a fully qualified path, and I had created a host file to point to the local server, so I first pinged the FQDN – whoa – it was resolving to the public DNS entry. It was so slow because the traffic was flowing out over the internet to the provider and then back to the server. I thought I might have made a mistake in the HOSTS entry, so I went to system32\drivers\etc – NO HOST FILE!

Yep, I was logged on as Administrator when I created the file. I tried a couple of times, and finally used Crimson editor to create the file, and left the system32\drivers\etc folder open in Explorer. About a minute later – POOF!

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I suspect this is a function of Windows System File Checker. I have done some research along those lines, but I'm unsure if the HOSTS file is one of those protected? The only way I can figure this one based on what I have read is that this machine didn't have a HOSTS file when SP2 was applied – so SFC thinks there should not be one. One other thought has occurred and that was the Malware Removal tool might be responsible.

I'm at a complete loss here – Thanks for any ideas.

jon b

If you don't want to spend the time finding the cause, after editing the file, you can go into the security settings for the file and change them such that nobody (even SYSTEM or yourself) can alter or delete the file while allowing the normal Read access. You'd have to change the permissions back to further edit the file, but this may be a workaround that won't take too much of your time.

HTH,  
John

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