What does this mean to you if you are still using Windows XP?

Assuming a new computer or upgraded computer is not a choice. There are some options to that will mitigate some of the exposure.

1. Pull the cord to remove it from the Internet. Computers not connected to the Internet will not be exposed to any security problems and can be used without concern.
2. Stop doing any financial transactions on the Internet
   a. Purchasing via credit cards online isn't a good thing to do with a less than secure operating system.
   b. No on line banking access. If your system get compromised and a worm gets your user name and password and passes it to a hacker, they will empty your bank account.
   c. Remove any sensitive data from your computer. Data that social security numbers or old tax returns.
3. Use an alternate browser that still gets patches. Because Microsoft ties support for Internet Explorer to the underlying operating system's end date, people running Windows XP will also not receive patches for Internet Explorer.
   a. Mozilla Firefox is my recommend choice. Mozilla stated, "We have no plans to discontinue support for our XP users." But have not committed for how long.
   b. Chrome (by Google) is also an option. Google pledged last October that Chrome on XP will be patched until at least April 2015.
4. If you use Microsoft Security Essentials (MSE) and are concerned about having protection. You will continue to receive anti-malware signature updates through July 14, 2015. However, note that PCs running Windows XP after April 8, 2014 will be considered un-protected and indicate as such by the red icon in the system tray.


   a. This make it difficult to quickly check and see if there is an issue. As red indicates an issue.
   b. An option is to monitor it manually everyday by opening MSE clicking the update tab and clicking the update button. After the update the Definitions created on date should never be more than one day old.
   c. Run a Quick scan once a day.
   d. Check the Real-time protection is on and Virus and spyware definitions Up-to-date as shown on the home screen. Even though both will indicate that

operating system support has ended.
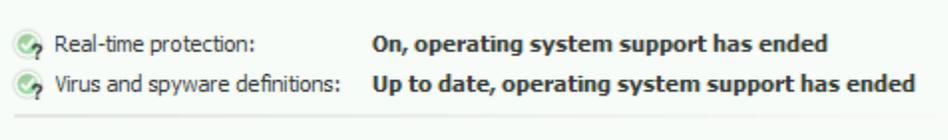
5. Install an alternate protection. There are many vendors selling virus protection, like McAfee, Norton. However if you don't want to spend money there are some free options available.
    a. Free AVG is an alternate virus protection I install on computers that are only capable of running Windows XP. It is available at http://free.avg.com/us-en/free-antivirus-download
6. Install Malwarebytes (free version) and scan your computer at least once a week.
    a. It can be download http://www.malwarebytes.org/ select the free version.
    b. The installation is very simple. Accept the license agreement and the default options are good except the final dialog box that is checked to Enable free trial of Malwarebytes anti-malware premium. Uncheck this box as you only need the free version. Although it isn't too hard to remove the trial version but unchecking during the install and any subsequent program updates avoids the hassle.
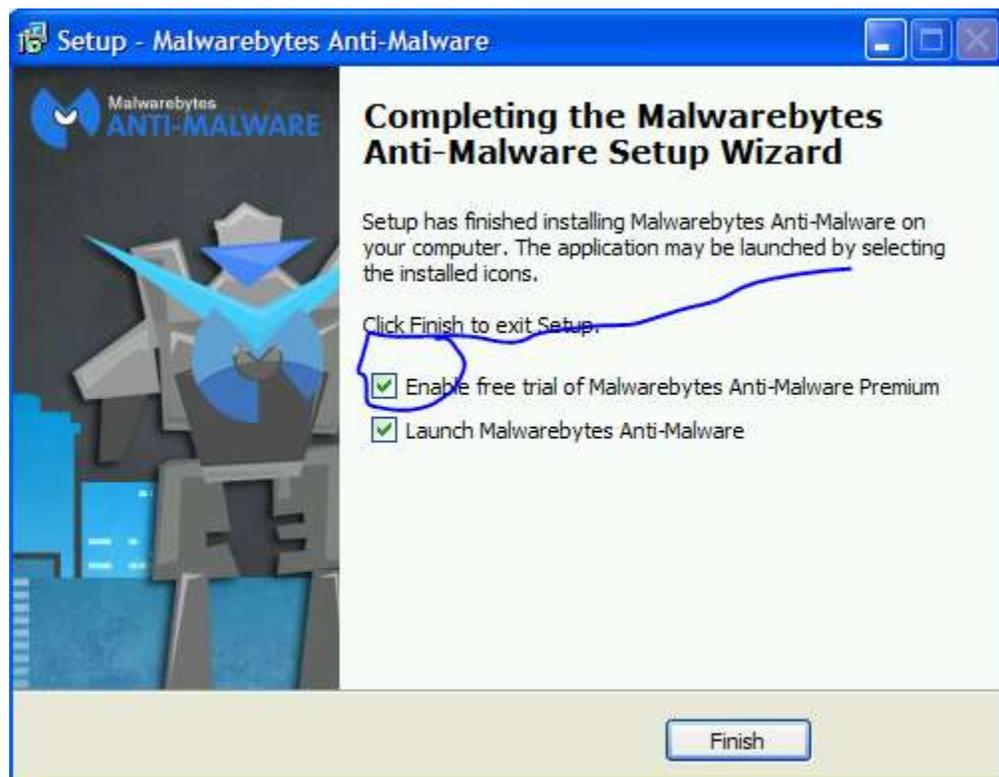
    c. Run a quick scan and Quarantine all and reboot and run a full scan by selecting the Custom scan under the Scan tab, select all the scanning options and any drives you have, normally that is just the C: drive.

No operating system is secure to prevent all the attackers that have worm traps placed on the Internet. So be careful out there. There are poisoned search results on the web. Here is a link on my web site that helps explain.
http://www.hottmancomputers.com/Tips/Poisoned%20Search%20Results.pdf

Don't open any email attachments from someone that you don't know. Even if you know someone but aren't expecting an attachment. Check with them before opening the attachment. The senders email account may have been hacked. The hacker sends out messages to everyone in the address book. Just hoping you will opened it because you know the sender and your computer will get infected and data will be compromised.

Finally, my services are available to help you secure your computer and provide you will some guidance on how to monitor.

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