

Sharing and downloading copyrighted music, movies, and games from the Internet without proper authorization is considered piracy, which is a violation of Federal copyright laws and K-State policy. It is commonly done using Peer-to-Peer (P2P) file sharing applications. In addition to the legal and policy ramifications, P2P file sharing applications can expose you to malicious programs that take control of your computer, inadvertently expose files containing your personal information, or cause congestion on the campus network.

### K-State Policy

K-State's IT Usage Policy ([www.k-state.edu/policies/ppm/3420.html](http://www.k-state.edu/policies/ppm/3420.html)) and P2P File Sharing Policy ([www.k-state.edu/policies/ppm/3490.html](http://www.k-state.edu/policies/ppm/3490.html)) both prohibit the use of IT resources for illegal purposes, such as the piracy described above. Consequently, P2P file sharing applications commonly used for illegal purposes are blocked on K-State's network using technology-based deterrents.

Examples of common file sharing programs that violate K-State policy:

- LimeWire and other Gnutella clients
- eDonkey or eMule
- BitTorrent
- Ares



### What happens when you're caught?

Violating K-State IT policy can lead to a full range of sanctions that include suspension of access to network resources or other appropriate university discipline, up to and including termination of employment and expulsion.

Infringers are also subject to serious civil and/or criminal liabilities. The Recording Industry Association of America, Motion Picture Association of America, Entertainment Software Association, and others actively search the Internet, including K-State's network, for illegal file sharing under the auspices of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA). They have located and successfully sued many infringers or settled out of court for substantial sums of money. Criminal penalties for violating federal copyright law include fines up to \$1 million and a maximum jail sentence of 10 years.

K-State has specific procedures it must follow when notified of an alleged copyright violation under the DMCA ([SecureIT.k-state.edu/procedures/DMCAnotice.html](http://SecureIT.k-state.edu/procedures/DMCAnotice.html)). After confirming the infringing activity, network access for the computer involved is blocked and an infringement notice is sent to the owner of the computer to respond.

### Legal Alternatives

Many services are available that allow you to pay for the music, movies, or TV shows on a per-item basis or through an "all-you-can-consume" monthly subscription fee.

Examples of legal media download alternatives include:

- Apple's iTunes
- Amazon's MP3 Store and Video on Demand Store
- Yahoo's Rhapsody
- Walmart's MP3 Music Downloads
- 7digital.com
- NetFlix



### The Bottom Line

**Don't download files illegally!**

It has multiple security risks. It's a violation of K-State policy. It's against the law.

**The legal alternative to illegal file sharing is simple – buy it!**

See K-State's *Illegal File Sharing* web site at [SecureIT.k-state.edu/filessharing](http://SecureIT.k-state.edu/filessharing) for more information.