

NCDOT EMAIL MESSAGE FILTERS

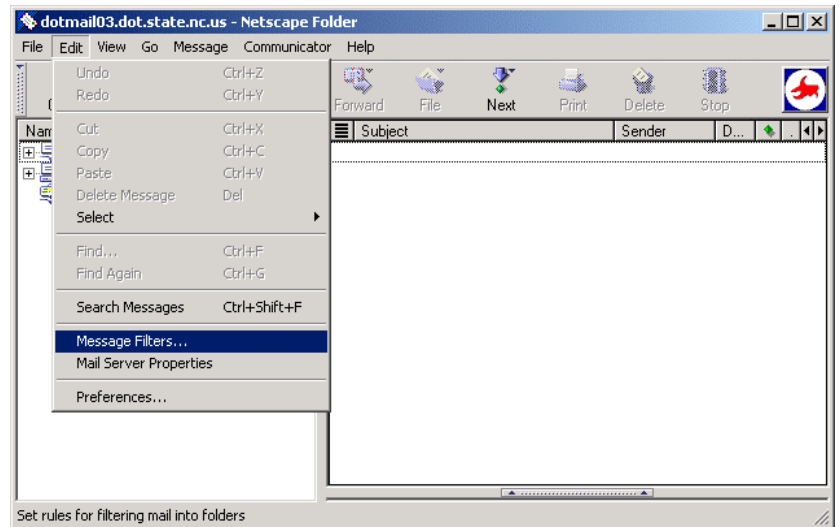
Using NETSCAPE MESSENGER 4.78©

To eliminate some of the unsolicited email users receive, Netscape Messenger includes a tool to automatically manage incoming mail. This process is aptly named message filtering. The following steps illustrate how to create filters, also included is advice on how to select keywords to filter on, and other ways to reduce unwanted messages.

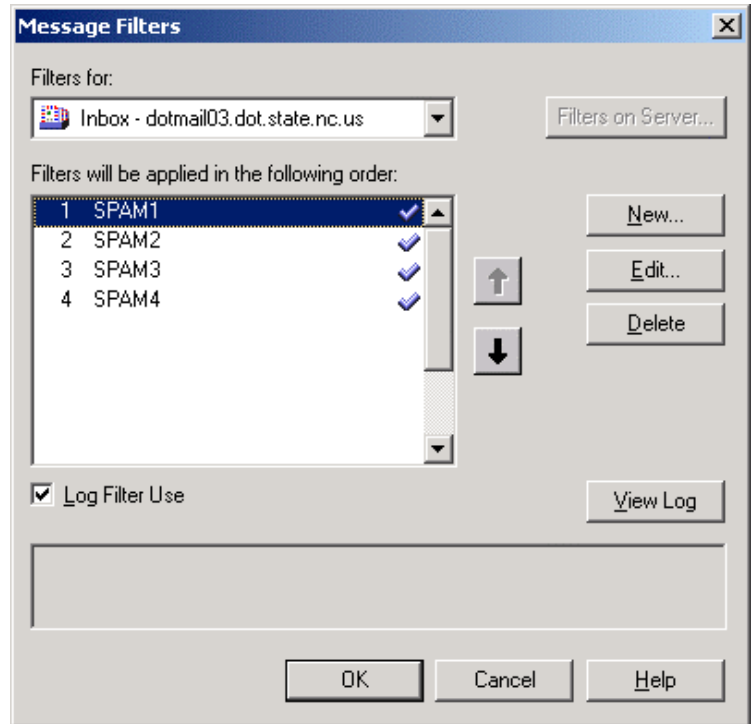
FILTERING

With Messenger open, and logged into your NCDOT account, follow these steps.

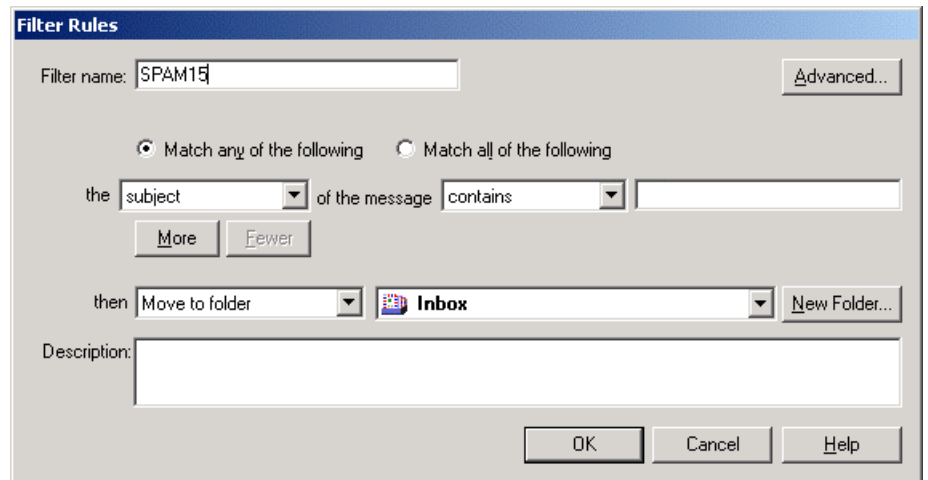
- Click **EDIT** in the Menu Bar, then click **MESSAGE FILTERS ...**



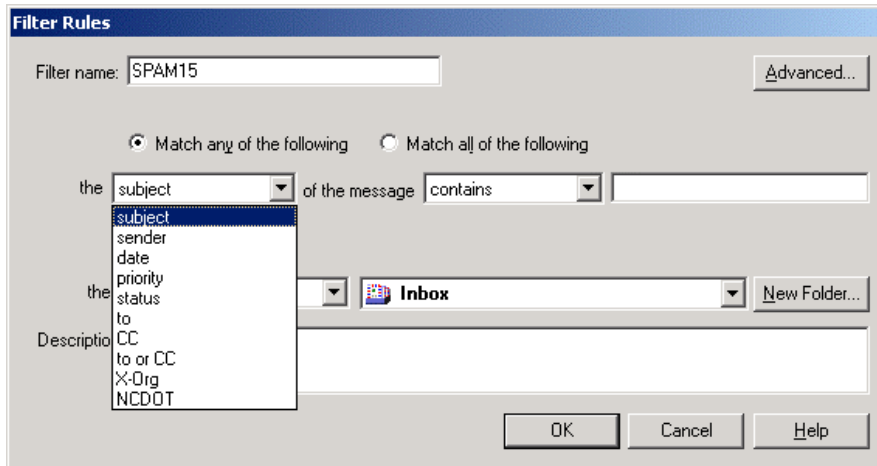
- If you want to edit an existing filter, select the filter from the list and click **EDIT...** . If you wish to create a new filter, click the **NEW...** button.



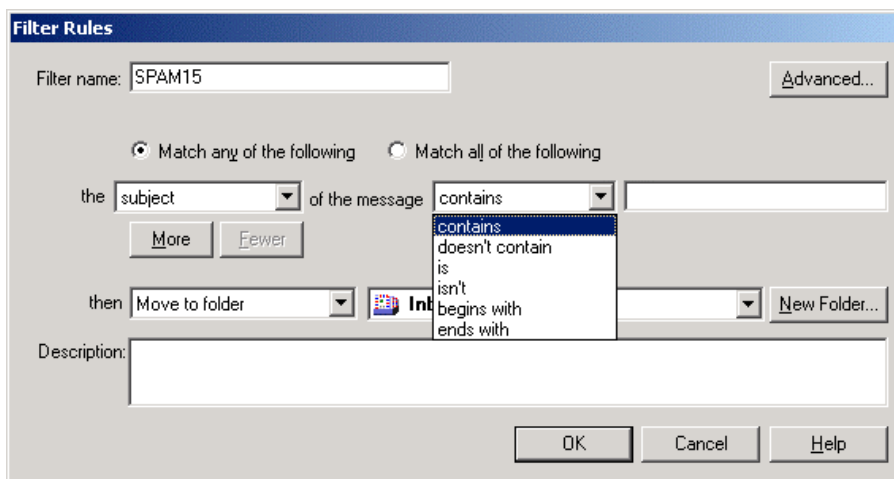
- Give the new filter a name. Then begin defining criteria to filter.



- You can filter on several fields. Choose one from the drop down list provided.

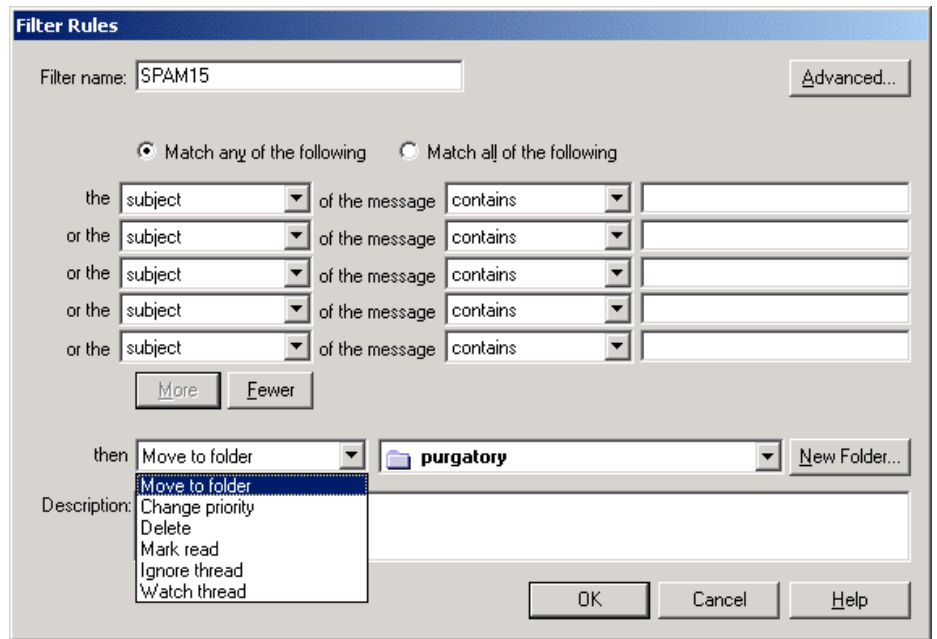


- You may then choose to filter that field in different ways.

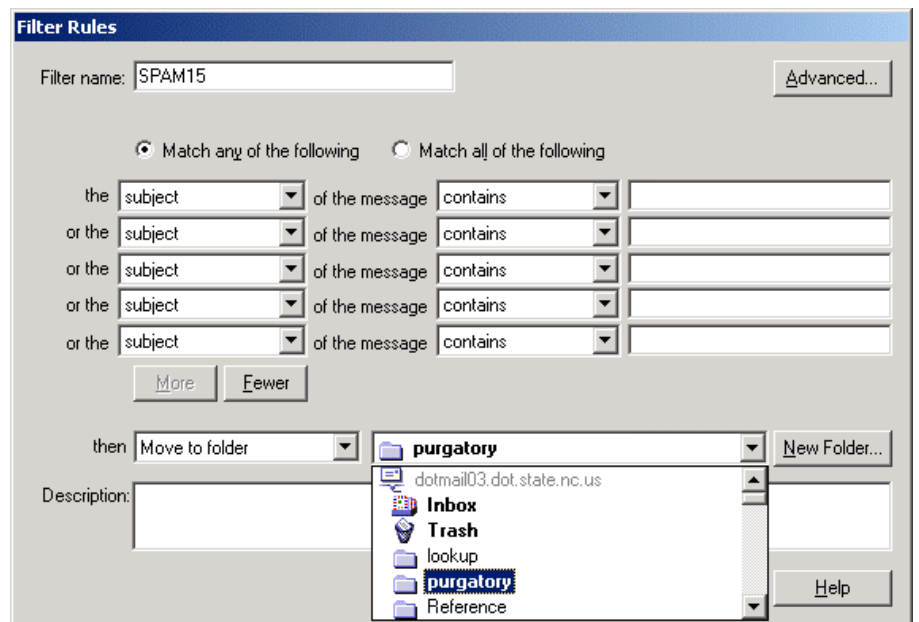


- Each saved filter can search for up to five criteria by clicking the **More** button. This allows one filter to control messages meeting any of the five criteria, (**Match any of the following** should remain selected). The filter can also combine criteria to make very selective filters, (**Match all of the following** should be selected).

- Once all criteria for the filter is entered, select the action to perform on messages meeting those conditions. In the case of unsolicited, non-business related mail, commonly referred to as SPAM, the typical choice is Delete. However, it might be advisable to store the captured mail in a safe folder for a few days in the event an important message met the criteria. This would allow for quick review of subject lines and recovery of mistakenly redirected messages.



- Should you choose to temporarily save the captured messages, select the folder to collect the messages.



- Click **OK** to save the filter. If you choose to keep a text log of messages captured by the filters you create, place a check in the **Log Filter Use** box. Click **New...** again to create another filter, or **OK** once more to close the **Message Filter** applet window.

KEYWORDS AND CRITERIA SELECTION

While many NCDOT users receive identical SPAM messages from time to time, not every user gets all the same unwanted mail. Therefore it is up to each user to create their own lists of keywords and criteria. Use the following advice to make decisions that best suit your needs.

Keywords

- Some words are naturals for filter criteria - drug names like Vioxx and Viagra. But SPAMmers know people filter those words so they put spaces or odd characters in these words when they use them in subject lines or as senders (example - Vi'agra). Watch what makes its way into your mail and include those spellings. You can copy and paste odd spellings into filters.
- Microsoft, Windows, Norton, and other software programs and companies will not notify you of special offers, warnings, etc. unless you have an existing relationship with them at the corporate level. Just using a version of Windows does not qualify. So those can be included in your filters as new names begin to show up.
- Many parts of company names in the sender field are good keywords. i.e. - Online, Pharmacy, Store, etc.
- Small words like "the", "of", "for", and "and" are often good keywords but you must realize these letters exist in real names of DOT employees with whom you might need to correspond. The way to incorporate them into a filter is by including a preceding and/or trailing space in the search term. The following examples use hyphens to indicate spaces (type spaces instead of hyphens in your filters) -and-, for-, -the-, the-, -of-.
- Experience shows that subject lines that include your email ID are nearly always SPAM. SPAMmers collect addresses from lots of places. Most of those places do not include full names. So messages sent with your email ID in the subject line usually are not from business associates. This makes your email ID a good filter keyword.
- Examples of other words to filter from "Sender" - TV, wholesale, wealth, cheap, offer, discount, credit, shop, saving, advisor, estate, fortune, diet, debt, stock, alert, health, check, Doctor.

Criteria

- Messenger allows a mixture of criteria in each filter you create. Not only can you combine multiple keywords, you can test for those keywords in different ways. Vioxx may appear in either subject or sender fields, and both conditions may be tested in a single filter. They may also be combined with other keywords. (Example - filter SPAM1 may test - Match any of the following criteria: Sender contains vioxx; Subject contains vioxx; Sender contains viagra; Subject contains viagra; Subject contains userid)
- Keywords can be strings of characters or even strings of words. (Examples - 123!\$#ABC; Dr. Pepper; Just For You; online pharmacy.)
- DO NOT combine keywords unless you are expecting the combination(s) to appear in SPAM subject or sender fields. "Online, Pharmacy" will not capture Online Giveaway, Discount Pharmacy, or Online Pharmacy (no comma).

- Sometimes mixed criteria combinations are necessary to block a message. Wal-Mart might be used in a valid message from your Business Officer or other DOT employees. But it might also be included in SPAM. So a good filter could include: Match all the following - Subject contains Wal-Mart, Sender doesn't contain dot.state.nc.us.

Additional Tips

- Understand - every filter that you create has to test every message you receive. If you create dozens of filters, each with four or five criteria, you could cause Messenger's performance to suffer. So occasionally log the filters' use and eliminate filters that no longer appear to be needed. They can always be reapplied if necessary.
- If messages trapped by your filters are moved to another folder to be reviewed later, don't forget to sort and delete them occasionally. Especially if the temporary storage folder is on the DOT email server. Collecting excessive messages in your account can also hamper Messenger's performance. And at a certain point, your Inbox will begin to reject all new mail until space is cleared.
- While some unsolicited email contains malicious code to steal information, infect or otherwise harm your system, the vast majority is just plain old advertising. The SPAMmers are the equivalent of TV networks or radio stations. People with goods or services to sell pay them well to broadcast their ads. In the world of email advertising, address lists mean cash. Address that can be verified active are gold. So NEVER respond to SPAM! It's important enough to repeat. NEVER respond to SPAM! Clicking an "Unsubscribe" link frequently puts your address on those lists of good addresses. Which in turn means exponential increases in SPAM. Stopping one message may open flood gates to dozens every day.
- As a matter of security - Never reveal identification or password information by email. There are countless ways that thieves use email to collect information that they can convert into money.