PC Club: Fixing a computer that won't sleep
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*The **North Orange County Computer Club** helps The Gadgetress tackle the multitude of readers' cries for help. NOCCC group has experts in Windows, Word and all sorts of computer topics. The club, which meets monthly on various topics, has been in existence since 1976. Visit the club's site at noccc.org.*

Question: I am unable to enter sleep or hibernation mode. I continually get an error message: "The device driver for the 'ATA Channel 1 device is preventing the machine from entering hibernation. You may need to update this driver." I have determined that I have the latest update for the driver, so that's not the problem. Would like to be able to enter the hibernation or sleep mode to avoid having the monitor on all the time, and getting the above error message. Thanks for your help. ~ Eliot Brody

PC Club: First of all Eliot, based on my research of the error message, this particular message may not provide sufficient clues as to what the real cause of your problem is. I did track down several other instances of this problem but there were no conclusive causes or solutions. Therefore, we're forced to resort to some troubleshooting steps. Be sure to backup any data before embarking on this journey.

I would try Dell if you haven't already done so. Other simple things to try include unplugging all of your USB devices and updating your video drivers since they can be the cause of many problems.

Next, if you have the "System Restore" function enabled on your system you could try restoring to a previous point in time. There is a helpful article on this at HowToGeek.com, "Using Windows Vista System Restore." Here's a shortcut to the page: tinyurl.com/2qhd77

If the problem still persists, you could start by eliminating programs that start up when Vista starts up. This can be accomplished by clicking the Vista "Start" button and typing "msconfig" in the search box and hitting "Enter." On the "General" page of the resulting dialog box, choose the "Selective Startup" option and un-check the box to load startup items.
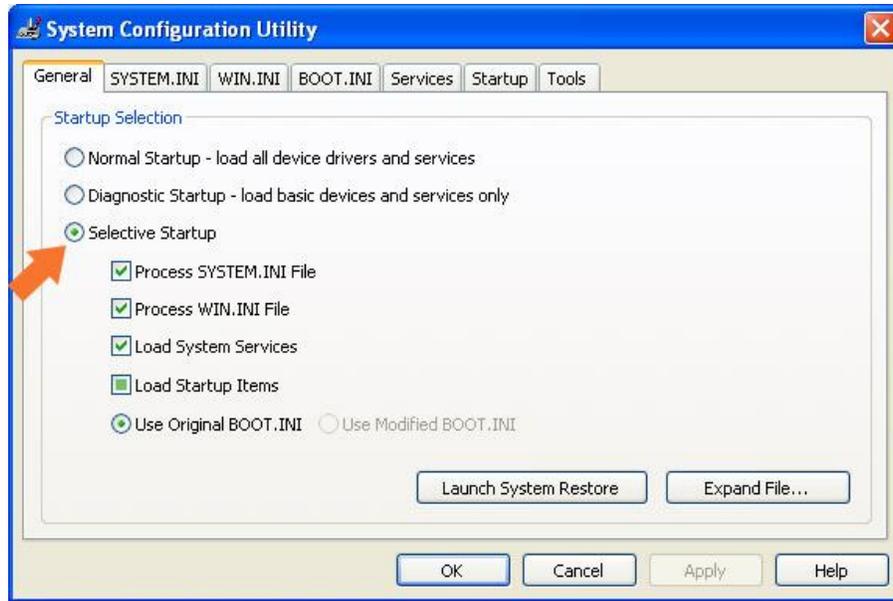
Re-boot to make the changes effective. If this resolves the problem, you can use the "Startup" tab of "msconfig" to re-enable startup items one at a time. During this process, your anti-virus program may be disabled so avoid the Internet and email until you are finished this step.

If all of the steps prove to be fruitless, try re-installing Vista. Microsoft offers instructions on reinstalling Vista online at tinyurl.com/2hn5yr.

The last resort is to use your restore media that came with your Dell computer to restore the system to its original "as purchased" state. I know that this sounds like a drastic step but it may be necessary. – *Ed Schwartz, NOCCC member and PC Instructor. View his blog at edwardns.blogspot.com.*