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PROFESSIONAL SERVICES TECH NOTE #046

Disk sanitization

The Concept

When disk drives grow old they are often replaced with new, larger capacity drives and then decommissioned. Alternatively, they find a new life on test/dev or second tier systems. If the drives held sensitive, proprietary information you will want to scrub the disks as a security precaution. NetApp offers a disk sanitization license which overwrites all data blocks using U.S. government and military approved algorithms.

Examples

First, convert the drives to be sanitized into spares by deleting the volumes and destroying the aggregate (SnapLock volumes must be expired before you can destroy them).

```
fas1> sysconfig -r
    verify the drives you want to sanitize are not part of an aggregate
fas1> disk sanitize start 0a.16 0a.23 0a.24 – begin sanitizing the listed spares disks
    Most versions of Data ONTAP only sanitize 5 disks at a time so consider that the recommended disklist size.
```

```
fas1> disk sanitize status – check the progress of the sanitize process
fas1> disk sanitize release [disk_list]
    release the specified sanitized disks from the maintenance pool to be used as spare disks.
```

Note: The sanitization information is logged to /etc/sanitization.log and /etc/sanitized_disks

What It Means To You

Degaussing has traditionally been the most effective means of sanitization. However, NetApp will not take back degaussed drives and other vendors will not offer trade-in value for them. Use the disk sanitization process when decommissioning a shelf or entire system to ensure data cannot be reconstructed.

The disk sanitization process offlines the drives so do NOT sanitize the drives in shelf bay 0 and 1 at the same time. If you do, the SCSI Enclosure Services (SES) will deactivate and offline the shelf which may cause a system panic (this is not documented, yet, but was learned by personal experience)

Note: If you have a defective drive with sensitive data on it, contact your NetApp sales team about our 'non-return disk policy' to keep the disks rather than return them. For drives you do return, NetApp policy is to attempt two disk sanitization passes before sending them to the manufacturer. NetApp also offers an auditable and verifiable Data Eradication and Disk Destruction Service.

More Information

Refer to the Data ONTAP System Management Guide for advanced information and options:

http://now.netapp.com/NOW/knowledge/docs/ontap/rel727_vs/html/ontap/smg/provisioning/task/t_oc_prov_disk-sanitizing.html

How to disk sanitize to DoD 5220.22M standards:

<https://now.netapp.com/Knowledgebase/solutionarea.asp?id=kb51906>

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