

SAMPLE CM POLICY

<company name> Change Management & Tuesday Night Maintenance Policy

Executive Summary:

Some changes to the network require outages. The IT team schedules these changes for Tuesday night between 6pm-10pm. For example, “high impact” network changes and server reboots happen then. In extreme circumstances (such as major migrations), outages will be scheduled for the weekend. Employees should plan around this, and avoid planning critical events Tuesday night or Wednesday morning. Notification will be sent to <email list name> by COB Tuesday (minor outages) or COB Monday (major outages). Managers can request postponement through <name of manager>.

This maintenance window policy seeks a balance between <company>’s need for a stable network and <company>'s need to evolve the network in a rapid manner to adjust for business conditions.

Change Policy:

This section defines when the different types of changes are permitted. The terms in **bold** are defined later.

- **Routine Updates** may be done at any time.
- **Major updates** must be scheduled for a **Maintenance Window**.
- **Sensitive updates** may not be done during **Network Quiet Times**. It is encouraged that they are performed out of hours, or during **Maintenance Windows**. They may be performed during the **Regular Business Day** if the risk is deemed acceptable and it is not a **Network Quiet Time**.
- **Unscheduled outages:** Obviously, unscheduled outages (server crashes, etc.) require immediate attention whenever they happen.
- **Major outages:** Outages that are predicted to last more than 2 hours.

Notification schedule:

Planned outages will be announced in advance as follows:

Planned Downtime:	Announcement will be made by:
None	No announcement, or a reminder by 10am Monday
Less than 2 hours	Announcement by COB Monday
2 or more hours	Announcement by 10AM Monday

The notification will go to <email address>, and will begin with a quick statement of when the outage will be, and who will be affected. The message will then list details of

what is being done using language that technical users can assess the impact to their environment.

Note: If the outage must be performed during the week, more than one month notice will be given. (For example, when our PBX was replaced during the week there was 2 months notice. The actual downtime was 3 hours on a Tuesday night.)

Types of Updates:

Updates fall into 1 of 3 categories:

- **Routine updates:** Updates that can happen at any time and are basically invisible to most of the customer base. Examples: creating a new account, installing a new PC.
- **Major updates:** Those that affect many systems or require a significant system, network or service outage or that touch a large number of systems. Examples: Rebooting servers, modification to the network infrastructure that will cause downtime, etc.
- **Sensitive updates:** One that may not seem to be a large update or particularly visible to your customers, but that could cause a significant outage if there is a problem with it.

Time Periods:

With respect for network changes, there are 4 time periods:

- **Regular Business Day:** Mon-Fri, 8am-6pm
- **Out of hours:** After 6pm (or before 8am) plus all hours Saturday and Sunday.
- **Maintenance Windows:** Pre-announced downtime windows, such as Tuesday 6-10pm.
- **Network Quiet Times:** Key dates where outages are unacceptable (the days leading to tax filing, the days before a major release or during a major launch).

Management Veto:

If a critical deadline will be jeopardized by a planned outage, the affected manager should contact <name of manager> to discuss delaying the maintenance window, or minimizing the the affect to the resources needed to meet the deadline. Usually the effects can be isolated from a particular group. In the event that a compromise cannot be reached, <name of VP> will make the final call.

Network Quiet Times:

Certain times of the year are considered “Network Quiet Times”. These include the days leading to tax filing, the days before a major release or during a major launch. Managers can file a request for Network Quiet Time via email to <name of manager>. It should include a start date and time, end date and time, and who to contact to verify that the Network Quiet Time is complete.

Pre-Vacation Time:

The two days prior to an IT Dept employee going on vacation they will only be permitted to make **Routine Updates**.

Post-window Checks:

After any scheduled maintenance window, the following systems will be checked:

Email:

- a message from the outside reaches <the company>.
- a message from <the company> reaches an ISP account.

VPN:

- Connections from the wireless network are working.
- Connections from the Internet are working.
- Drive letters are mounting.
- Email is accessible via IMAP4.
- Email can be sent from the VPN.

DHCP:

- DHCP on <list of networks> works.

Web:

- <URLs on key external sites>
- <URLs on key internal sites>

Note: It is IT's goal to set up a system to constantly monitor these issues. Once that system includes all of these tests, the IT department should simply have to check the “monitoring dash board” to see that all these systems are working.

or

Note: IT has a system to constantly monitor the above items. The “monitoring dash board” will be “all green” to verify that all systems are up. The exception is the following systems that will be manually tested individually: <insert list here (DHCP is a good example)>