Understanding Track Changes in Word 2010

The tools in Microsoft Word that allow you to add comments or track changes greatly simplify document collaboration and revision. Unfortunately, they can also lead to inadvertent disclosure of confidential information.

What Could Be Hiding in My Document?

In the "Review" tab under Tracking you will find four different ways to display a revised document:

Final: Show Markup	Original: Show Markup
Final	Original

The "Final" and "Original" views <u>hide</u>, but don't delete tracked changes and comments. If you temporarily hide these edits and distribute your document, a recipient can very easily change the view and see all your comments and revisions. Even when Final: Show Markup or Original: Show Markup is selected, some editing changes may remain hidden if the user has chosen to hide them using the Show Markup▼ button.

## How Do I Check a Document for Tracked Changes and Comments?

Click on the File tab. Select Info, then Check for Issues, then Inspect Document. You may be prompted to save your document. In the Document Inspector screen, click Inspect. Inspect Document searches for metadata, including comments, revisions, versions, and annotations. If comments and tracked changes are found, you can choose to remove them.

How Do I remove Tracked Changes and Comments Permanently?

First make sure that all editing changes are visible in your document. In the Review tab, locate the Tracking group, and click the Show Markup▼ button. Verify that a check mark appears next to each of the items: Comments, Ink, Insertions and Deletions, Formatting, and Markup Area Highlight. Also under Show Markup▼ choose Reviewers and verify that All Reviewers is selected.

Proceed to accept or reject the changes made by <u>all reviewers.</u> Refer to the step-by-step directions in Word if you don't know how to accept or reject changes. In the Help menu, search for "How do I get rid of my tracked changes and comments?"

Comments must be deleted separately. In the Review tab, locate the Comments group. Click on the delete button and select "Delete All Comments in Document."
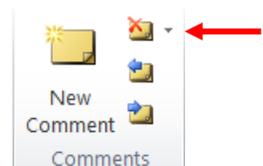
Keeping Public and Private Copies of Documents

Microsoft recommends that if you want to keep a copy of a document reflecting tracked changes or comments <u>and</u> share the document without others seeing the tracked changes and comments, the best solution is to keep separate copies of the document:

- Create a "public" copy of the document for distribution. Be sure to accept or reject all tracked changes and delete comments. Give the "public" document an appropriate name to make it distinguishable on it's face from the "private" document.

- In the "private" version, leave the tracked changes and comments as is.

Practice Tip: You may also wish to restrict editing to prevent unintended changes to the public and private versions of your document. In the "Review" tab, locate the Protect group at the far right of the ribbon. Click on "Restrict Editing." The Restrict Formatting and Editing Pane opens on the right of your screen. Make the appropriate selections, then choose "Yes, Start Enforcing Protection." You can also protect your document by setting Permissions. Under the File tab, locate Permissions, click on Protect Document. In addition to restricting editing, you can mark a document as final, encrypt with a password, or add a digital signature.

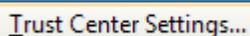### Help! I'm Still Worried – Is There a Safety Net?

Turn on "warn before printing, saving or sending a file that contains tracked changes or comments." Follow these steps:

1. Click on the File tab.

2. Select Options.
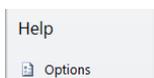
3. In the Navigation Pane, choose Trust Center. Under the Microsoft Office Word Trust Center, select Trust Center Settings…

4. Click on Privacy Options.

5. Under Document-specific settings, check the box "Warn before printing, saving or sending a file that contains tracked changes or comments."

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January 26, 2011