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## On Your Side: Hard-Drive Repair Horror

**Always back up your data before sending out your PC for repair.**

**Grace Aquino**

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**U**The metal cover on one of my floppy disks broke off and got lodged inside my Compaq Presario 710 notebook. So I sent the laptop to Hewlett-Packard for repair. Before sending it, I stated on a service form that I did not give HP authority to work on my hard drive.

Days later a technician working on my laptop told me that an error message popped up, stating 'operating system cannot be found'. The rep asked for my permission to wipe the drive clean. I denied permission and requested that my computer be returned immediately.

I received my computer the next day and was shocked to find that the hard drive had been removed and replaced. All my files were gone.

*M. Chrystal Solola, Munster, Indiana*

**On Your Side responds:** HP spokesperson Kris Dahl says that after a technician installed a new floppy drive, Solola's computer wouldn't boot because the hard drive had stopped working. A tech replaced it to get the laptop back to working condition.

Dahl explains that HP's notebook warranty stipulates that if a component fails, HP can choose to replace it. Once that part has been removed from the computer, it becomes HP's property. The company's policies also state that it is not responsible for damage to or loss of data.

If possible, always back up your data--including programs you installed--before sending out your PC for repair.

Ultimately HP issued Solola a full refund of \$1260 for the notebook.

*Grace Aquino is senior associate editor for PC World. E-mail her at [onyourside@pcworld.com](mailto:onyourside@pcworld.com). Click [here](#) for more On Your Side columns.*

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