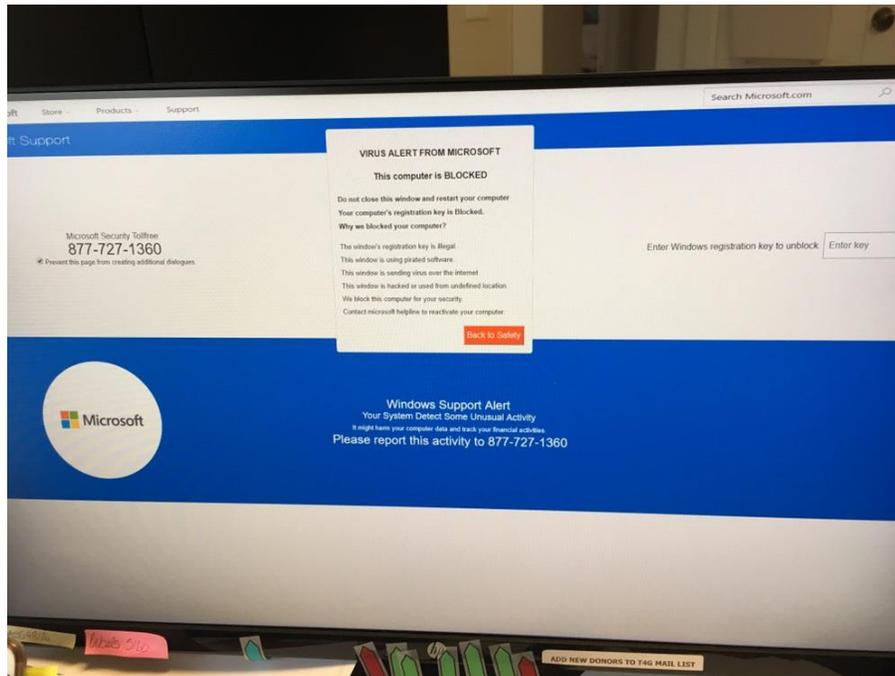You're surfing around the Interwebs, minding your own business, and this happens:
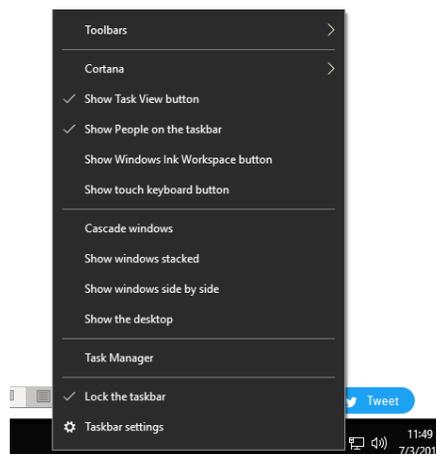

The warning page may be accompanied by sirens or loud, urgent talking in a thick foreign accent. It's very urgent-sounding and looking, and looks very official. So what should you do now?
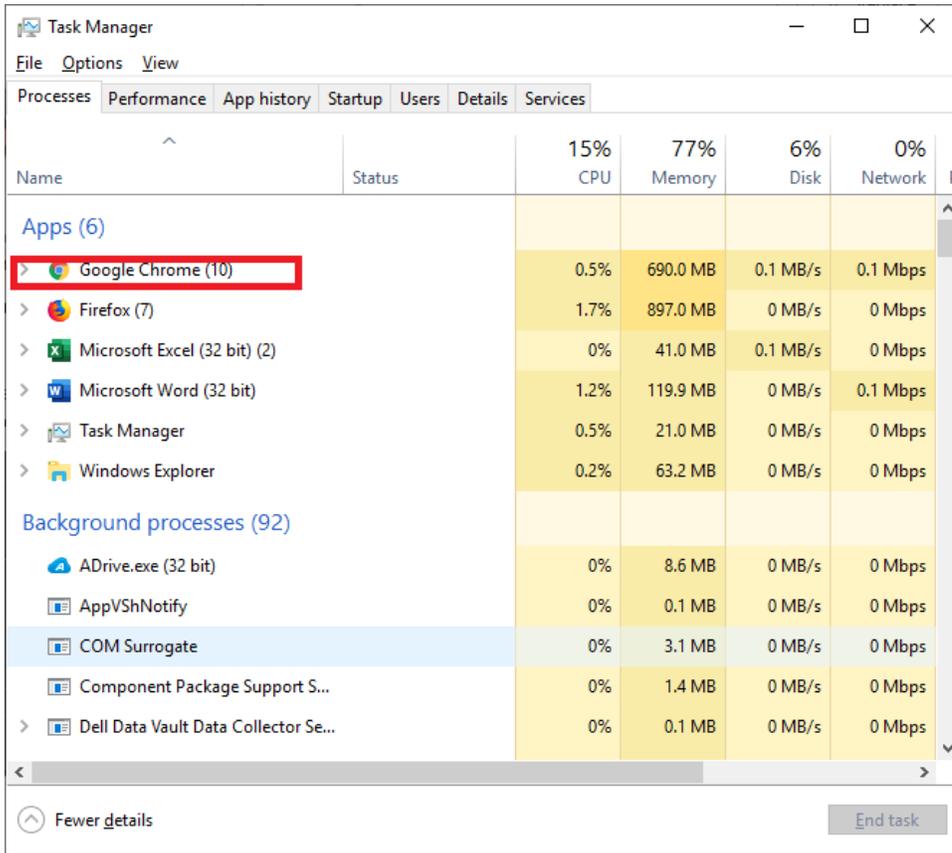
First: Don't panic. This warning is a scam and I will now prove it to you.

Calmly close your browser. If you can't get the browser to close, use task manager to close it.

> To get to task manager, right-click on the task bar (typically along the bottom of the screen) and select 'Task Manager'. You can also press CTRL-ALT-DEL and select Task Manager.

Task Manager will show you a list of the running programs in the Process tab view. Select the browser you are using (Chrome, FireFox, Bing, Internet Explorer, etc) and right click on the entry for that browser.

Select 'End Task' from the context menu and the browser should shut right down and take the annoying warning with it. That's it.

Things to consider: There are billions of PCs out there running Windows. The resources required to provide all those PCs with *free* virus scanning 24/7 would be enormous. Microsoft is not, nor shall they ever, be monitoring your PC.

Also, it's a good idea to write down the phone number from the warning. When I Google the one above, 877-727-1360, I see a few results come up, and not a single one of them has anything whatsoever to do with Microsoft or any tech firm.

In addition, if you should happen to have called them, **Do Not under any circumstance**, allow them access to your PC. Granting the scammers access will open up your data to them to do as they please. The scammers will try to get you to give them a credit card number, clearly a no-no, or to get gift cards to pay them. Gift cards are not recognized as a form of currency by any agency except the one who produced it. So Wal-Mart will accept a Wal-Mart gift card, but it isn't accepted by Microsoft (or the IRS, or the Sherrif's Dept, etc).

Oh, last word on the topic: Don't go back to the web page that started all this. Its been infected. The good news is that you aren't.