

# How to block or sinkhole domains in Windows Server 2008

## How to block or sinkhole domains on Windows server 2008 DNS.

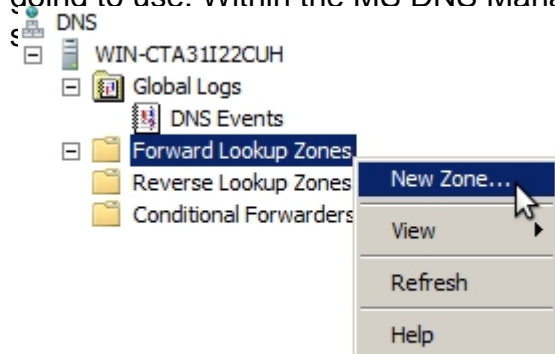
There may come a time when you may require to sinkhole or block a large number of domains.

One of the easiest way of doing this is within your BIND DNS infrastructure by making your DNS Resolvers authoritative for the domains that you wish to block.

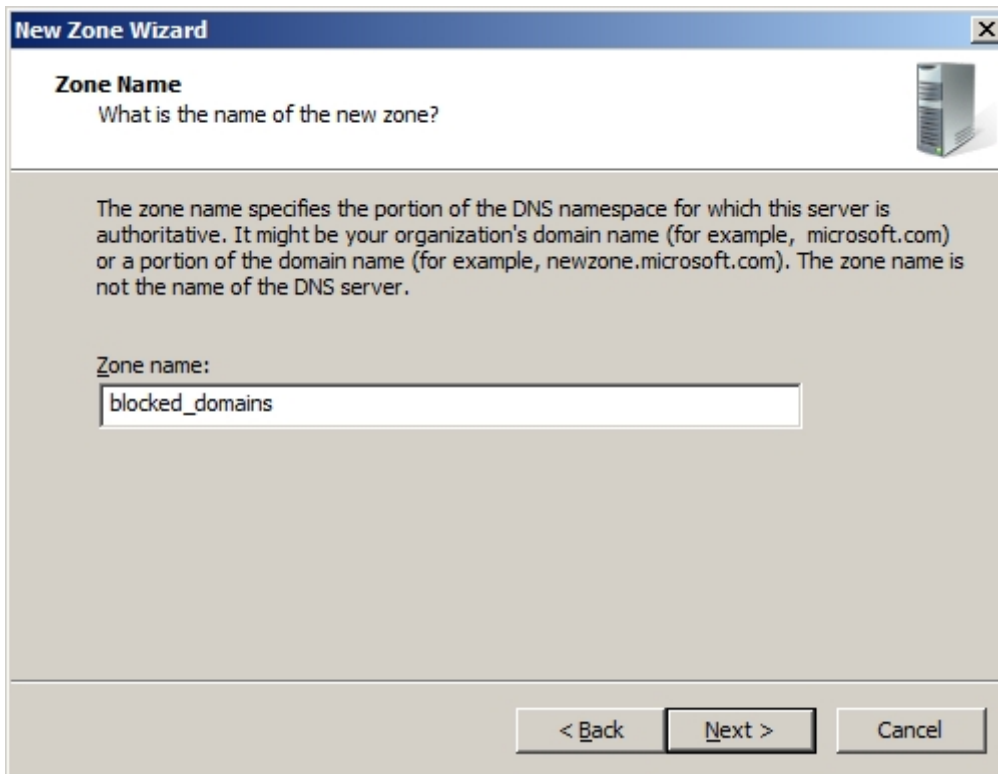
However if you do not have a BIND DNS server then this guide will allow you to sinkhole domains within a windows server 2008 environment.

Microsoft's implementation of DNS is heavily centered around a GUI interface and is not natively designed to work with text files for mass import of domains, however there are some tweaks that we can make in order to do so.

The first thing that we can do is create the default zone that all of our blocked domains are going to use. Within the MS DNS Manager utility right click Forward Lookup Zones and the



When confronted with the New Zone Wizard select Next ? Select Primary zone ? Next



The screenshot shows the 'New Zone Wizard' window with the 'Zone Name' tab selected. The title bar reads 'New Zone Wizard'. Below the title bar, the tab is labeled 'Zone Name'. The main text asks 'What is the name of the new zone?'. A server icon is in the top right. A paragraph explains that the zone name specifies the portion of the DNS namespace for which the server is authoritative, giving examples like 'microsoft.com' or 'newzone.microsoft.com'. Below this, a text box labeled 'Zone name:' contains the text 'blocked\_domains'. At the bottom are three buttons: '< Back', 'Next >', and 'Cancel'.

**Zone Name**  
What is the name of the new zone?

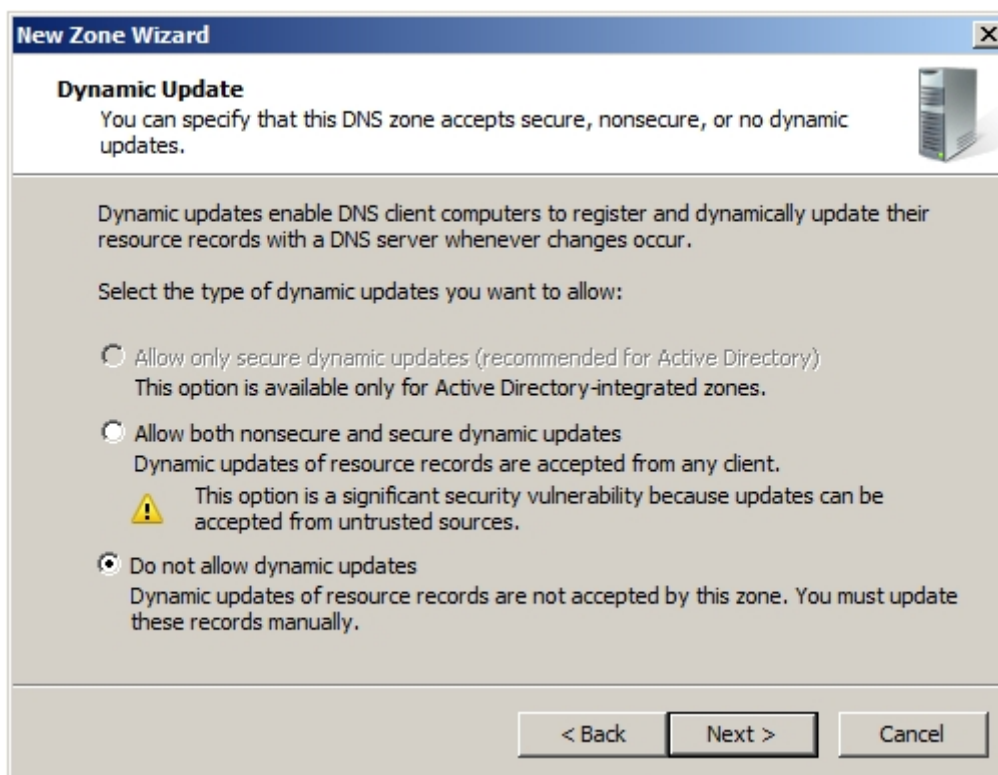
The zone name specifies the portion of the DNS namespace for which this server is authoritative. It might be your organization's domain name (for example, microsoft.com) or a portion of the domain name (for example, newzone.microsoft.com). The zone name is not the name of the DNS server.

Zone name:  
blocked\_domains

< Back   Next >   Cancel

Now enter the name that you want to give this zone. And then accept the default filename of the specified Zone name.dns in this example it is blocked\_domains.dns.

The next page in the wizard talks about dynamic updates.




The screenshot shows the 'New Zone Wizard' window with the 'Dynamic Update' tab selected. The title bar reads 'New Zone Wizard'. Below the title bar, the tab is labeled 'Dynamic Update'. The main text asks 'You can specify that this DNS zone accepts secure, nonsecure, or no dynamic updates.' A server icon is in the top right. A paragraph explains that dynamic updates enable DNS client computers to register and dynamically update their resource records with a DNS server whenever changes occur. Below this, it says 'Select the type of dynamic updates you want to allow:'. There are three radio button options: 1. 'Allow only secure dynamic updates (recommended for Active Directory)' with a note 'This option is available only for Active Directory-integrated zones.' 2. 'Allow both nonsecure and secure dynamic updates' with a note 'Dynamic updates of resource records are accepted from any client.' and a warning icon with the text 'This option is a significant security vulnerability because updates can be accepted from untrusted sources.' 3. 'Do not allow dynamic updates' (which is selected) with a note 'Dynamic updates of resource records are not accepted by this zone. You must update these records manually.' At the bottom are three buttons: '< Back', 'Next >', and 'Cancel'.

**Dynamic Update**  
You can specify that this DNS zone accepts secure, nonsecure, or no dynamic updates.

Dynamic updates enable DNS client computers to register and dynamically update their resource records with a DNS server whenever changes occur.

Select the type of dynamic updates you want to allow:

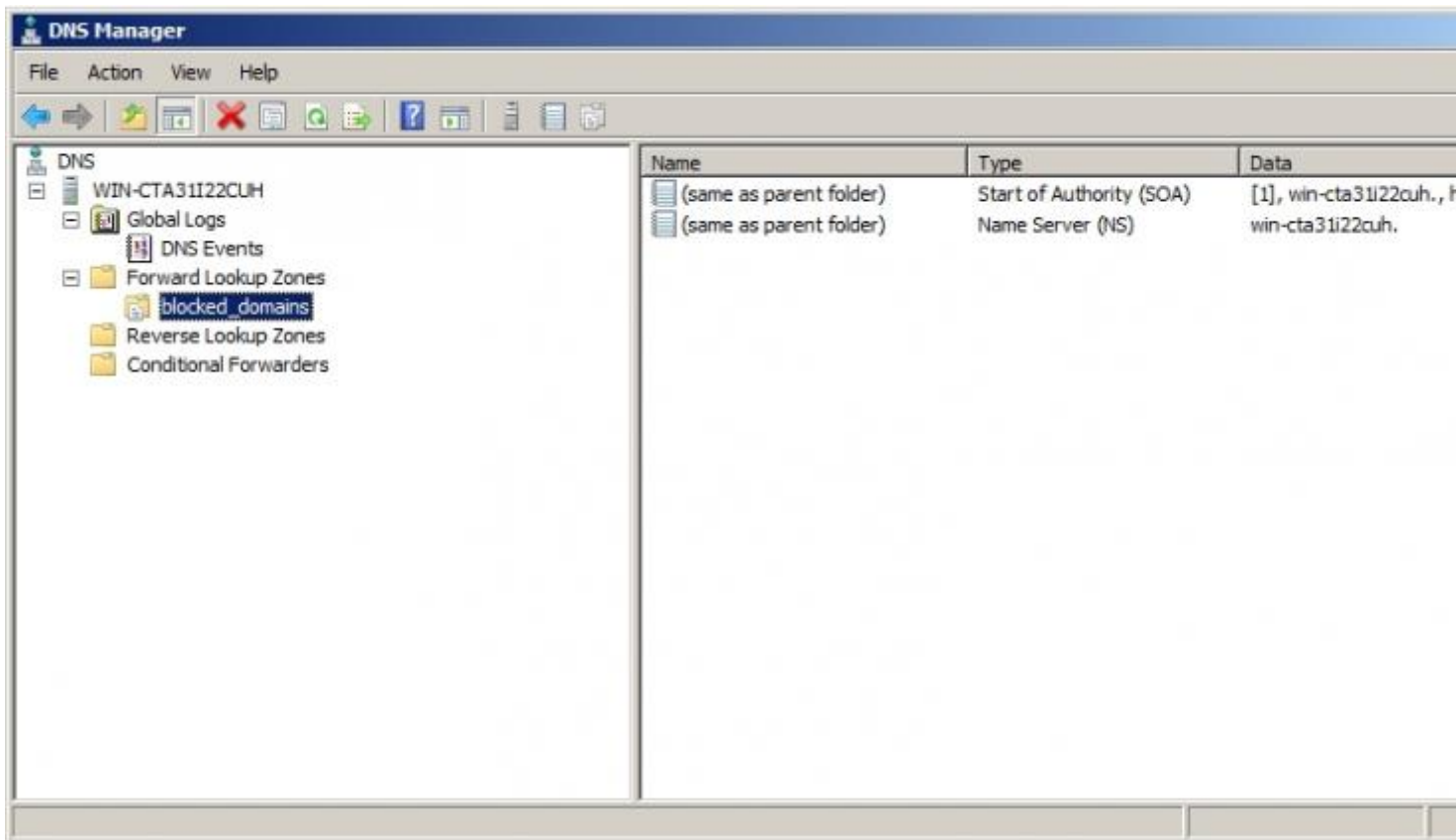
- ☐ Allow only secure dynamic updates (recommended for Active Directory)  
This option is available only for Active Directory-integrated zones.
- ☐ Allow both nonsecure and secure dynamic updates  
Dynamic updates of resource records are accepted from any client.  
 This option is a significant security vulnerability because updates can be accepted from untrusted sources.
- ☒ Do not allow dynamic updates  
Dynamic updates of resource records are not accepted by this zone. You must update these records manually.

< Back   Next >   Cancel

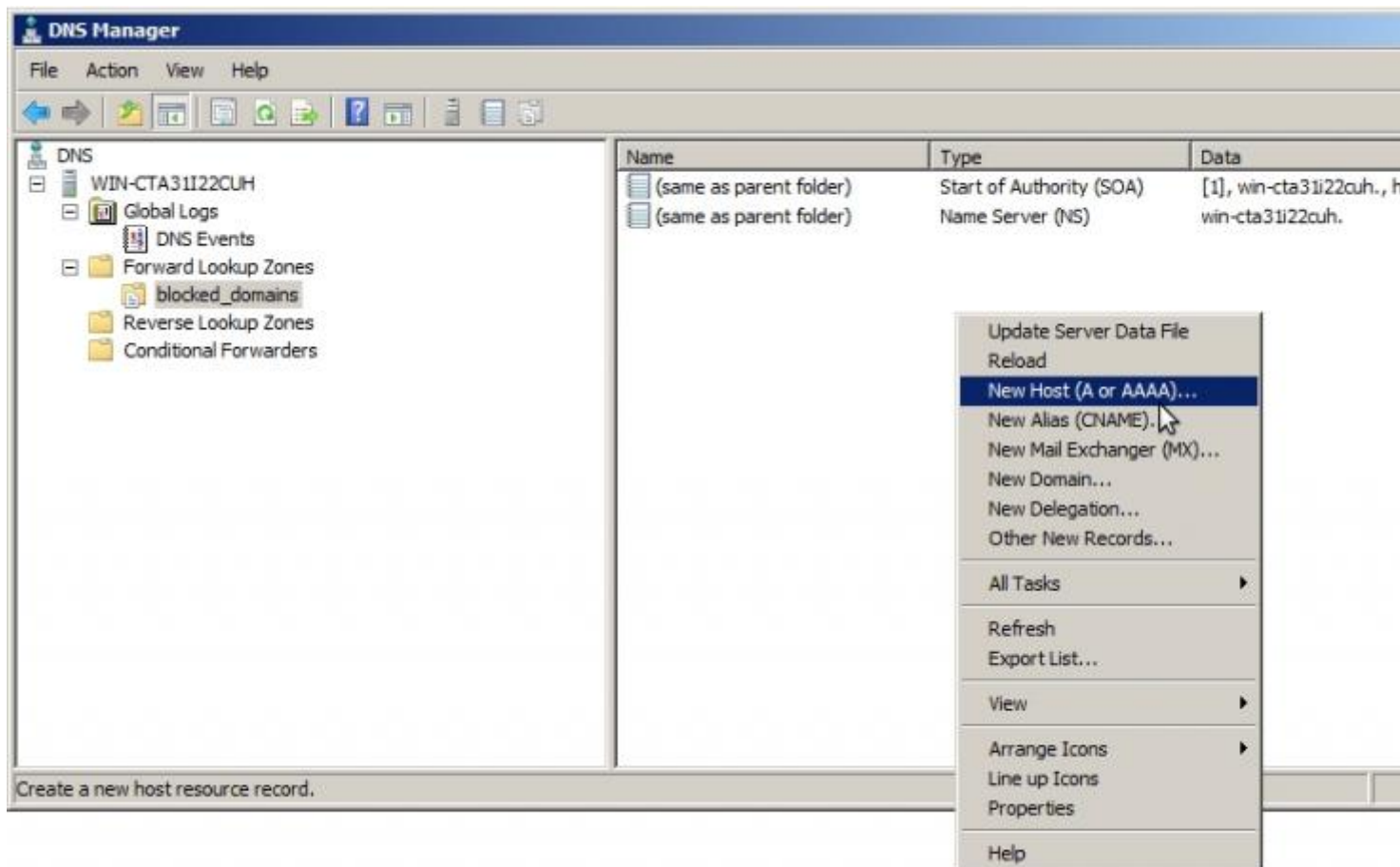
We do not want these being updated dynamically from clients in this case we use **Do not allow dynamic updates**, now just finish through the wizard.

You will now see the newly created zone of blocked\_domains listed in your Forward Lookup

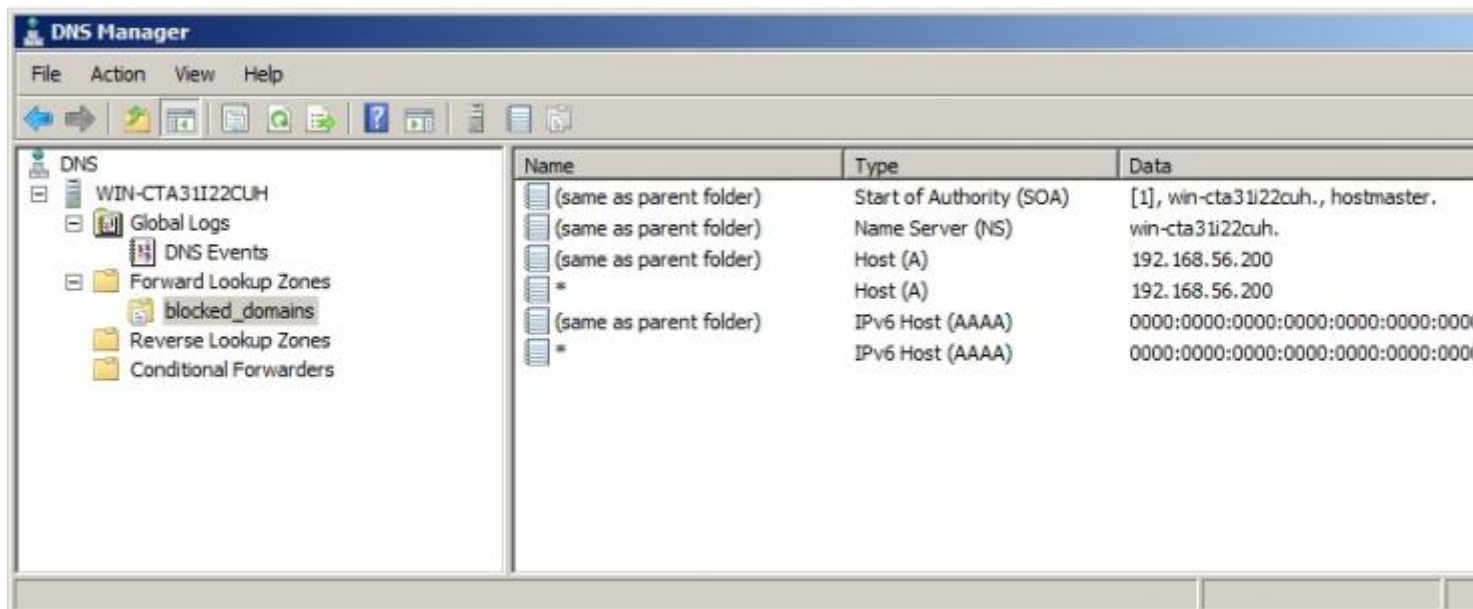
Zones within the MS DNS Manager utility along with some initial configuration for the zone.



We now need to add the appropriate entries to this zone for the blacklisting of the domain and sub-domains of the blacklisted domain. As such we now add the wildcard A and AAAA records. Right click in the right pane under the blocked\_domains container and select “**New Host (A or AAAA)...**”



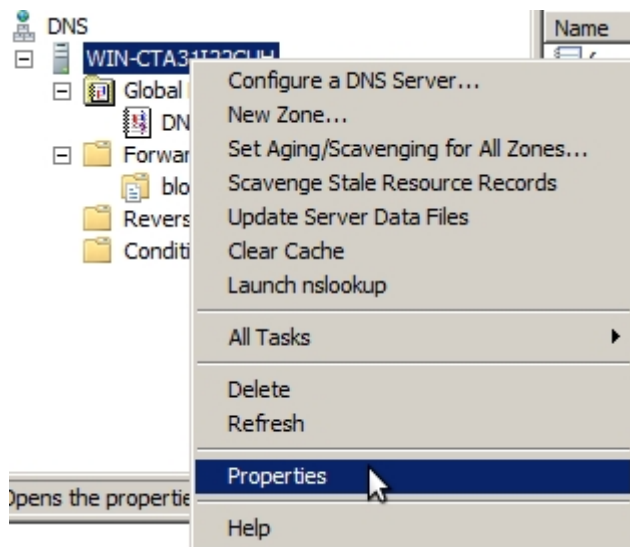
Now fill out the required information that is needed, in the example below we created both A and AAAA records. The A records are pointing to a sinkhole and the AAAA are pointing to local host.



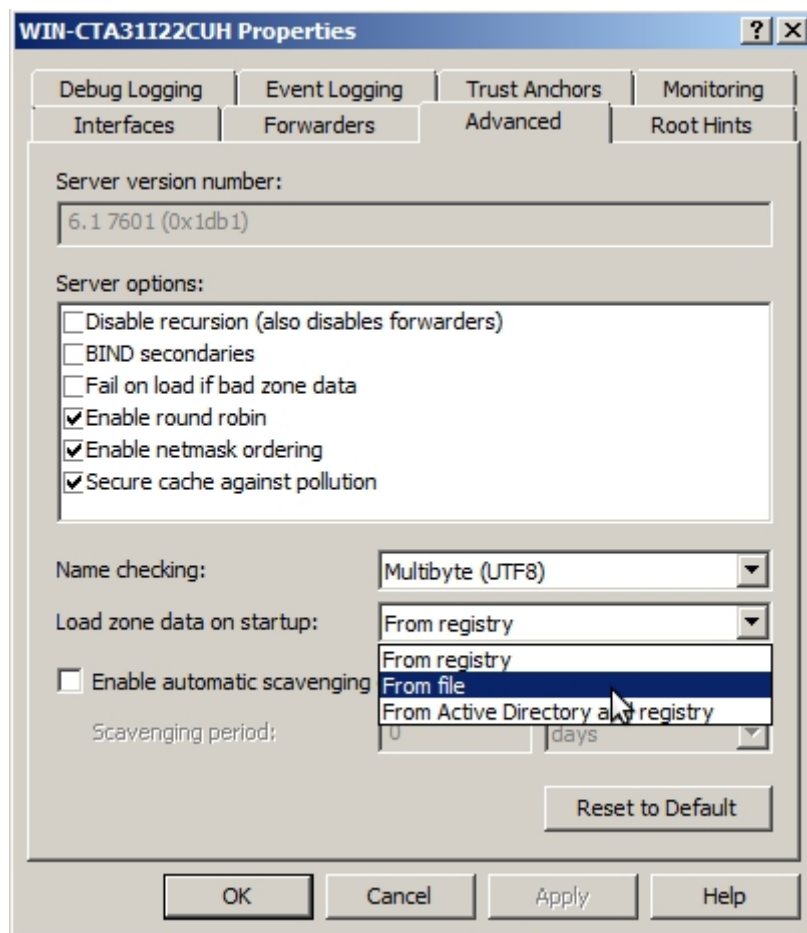
Now that this has now been defined we can now specify that the DNS server loads its zone data from a file rather than from the registry on first load, this will enable us to operate bulk updates.

We now need to right click the DNS server and then select Properties and select the

Advanced tab on the DNS server Properties Window.



We now choose to **Load zone data on startup: from file** and then select apply.



Now if we check in %SystemRoot%\System32\DNS (normally C:\Windows\System32\dns) we will see a few files blocked\_domains.dns and boot.

Blocked\_domains.dns contains the configuration for the zone we recently configured, and as you can see looks very similar to a BIND zone file if you are familiar with them.

;

```

; Database file blocked_domains.dns for blocked_domains zone.
; Zone version: 5
;

@                IN  SOA win-cta31i22cuh. hostmaster. (
                    5          ; serial number
                    900        ; refresh
                    600        ; retry
                    86400      ; expire
                    3600       ) ; default TTL

;
; Zone NS records
;

@                NS win-cta31i22cuh.

;
; Zone records
;

@                A 192.168.56.200
@                AAAA ::1
*                A 192.168.56.200
*                AAAA ::1

```

The other file, boot is used to define the separate zones or domains. Here we can specify what domains we want to block, by stating the domain type, the domain and the appropriate zone file.

```

;
; Boot information written back by DNS server.
;

cache      .          cache.dns
primary    blocked_domains    blocked_domains.dns

```

Once we have added a few domains that we wish to block the boot file will look as follows.

```

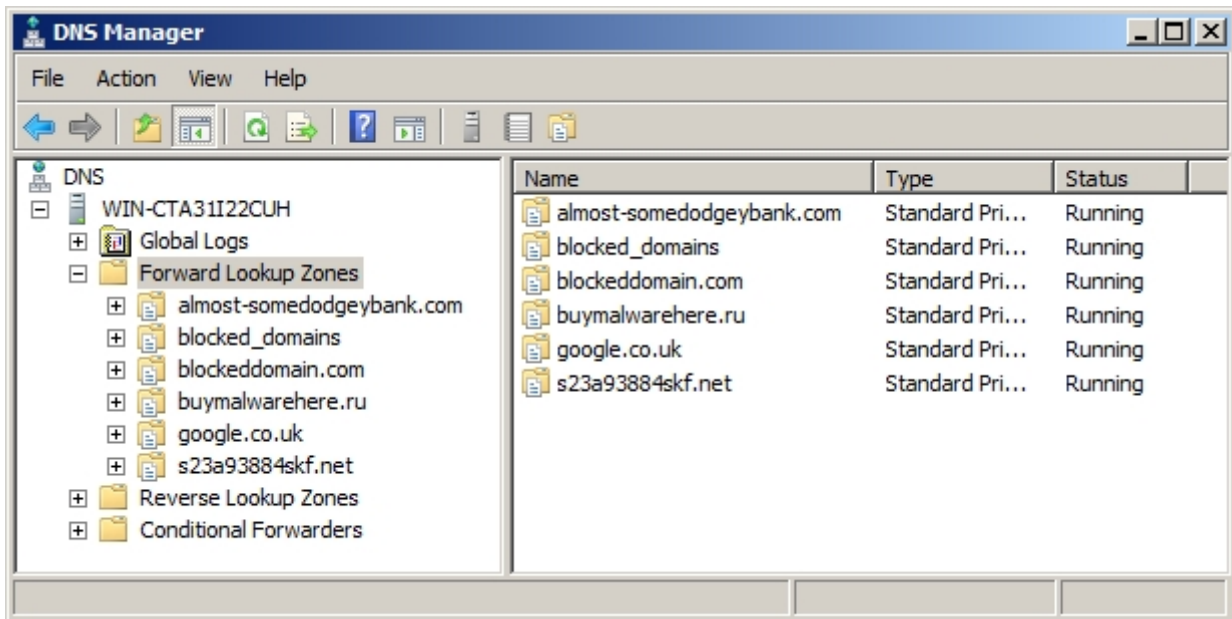
;
; Boot information written back by DNS server.
;

cache      .          cache.dns
primary    blocked_domains    blocked_domains.dns
primary    blockeddomain.com  blocked_domains.dns
primary    buymalwarehere.ru  blocked_domains.dns
primary    s23a93884skf.net    blocked_domains.dns
primary    almost-somedodgeybank.com blocked_domains.dns
primary    google.co.uk        blocked_domains.dns

```

You can now save the the file. However as the file is only read on the startup of the DNS service you will need to **restart the DNS Server service** within the server manager. Once this

has been restarted the added domains will now be within the MS DNS manager as shown below.



From the queries below the DNS server is now acting as primary for these domains meaning that any queries it receives for these domains instead of looking them up it will respond with it's configuration.

```
:~$ dig @192.168.56.101 almost-somedodgeybank.com

; <<>> DiG 9.8.1-P1 <<>> @192.168.56.101 almost-somedodgeybank.com
; (1 server found)
;; global options: +cmd
;; Got answer:
;; ->>HEADER<<- opcode: QUERY, status: NOERROR, id: 907
;; flags: qr aa rd ra; QUERY: 1, ANSWER: 1, AUTHORITY: 0, ADDITIONAL: 0

;; QUESTION SECTION:
;almost-somedodgeybank.com.      IN      A

;; ANSWER SECTION:
almost-somedodgeybank.com. 3600 IN      A      192.168.56.200

;; Query time: 5 msec
;; SERVER: 192.168.56.101#53(192.168.56.101)
;; WHEN: Tue May 27 12:34:02 2014
;; MSG SIZE rcvd: 59
```

```
~$ dig AAAA @192.168.56.101 almost-somedodgeybank.com

; <>> DiG 9.8.1-P1 <>> AAAA @192.168.56.101 almost-somedodgeybank.com
; (1 server found)
;; global options: +cmd
;; Got answer:
;; ->>HEADER<<- opcode: QUERY, status: NOERROR, id: 37125
;; flags: qr aa rd ra; QUERY: 1, ANSWER: 1, AUTHORITY: 0, ADDITIONAL: 0

;; QUESTION SECTION:
;almost-somedodgeybank.com.      IN      AAAA

;; ANSWER SECTION:
almost-somedodgeybank.com. 3600 IN      AAAA      ::1

;; Query time: 0 msec
;; SERVER: 192.168.56.101#53(192.168.56.101)
;; WHEN: Tue May 27 12:38:28 2014
;; MSG SIZE rcvd: 71
```

### Caveats to blocking domains

There are some easy ways that clients may be able to mitigate these DNS configurations. By modifying their hosts file on their systems to point at the correct IP addresses for the domains or by using a public resolver however both of these methods will require local administrator access.

You should only do this on your internal resolvers, if you take these actions on your public facing authoritative servers then you will be responding to domains which are not your responsibility.

Taking these actions on domains which are secured with DNSSEC will also break the security on them. If validation is turned on then the resolution will fail and the sinkhole will not get contacted.

This guide has been conducted on a system that is not running active directory DNS and there could be some issues experienced within such an environment.

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**Source URL:** <https://community.jisc.ac.uk/library/janet-services-documentation/how-block-or-sinkhole-domains-windows-server-2008>