

*This file is part of the document FECFile UserManual for Candidate Committees. To learn more about the Federal Election Commission, the Electronic Filing Program, or find this document by section follow the following links, respectively:*

[FEC HOME](#) > [ELECTRONIC FILING](#) > [FECFile USER MANUAL](#)



# FECFile User Manual for Candidate Committees

This manual is designed to help political committees use FECfile software and to assist with the filing of disclosure reports. The format is user-friendly and contains step-by-step instructions, along with screen shots, in an effort to help users maneuver through the software. Some of the areas found in this manual include: How to enter transactions on each line, How to upload a report, How to file a miscellaneous electronic submission and How to make sense of some common error codes.

## **Edition date**

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## **Author**

Data Systems Training and User Support

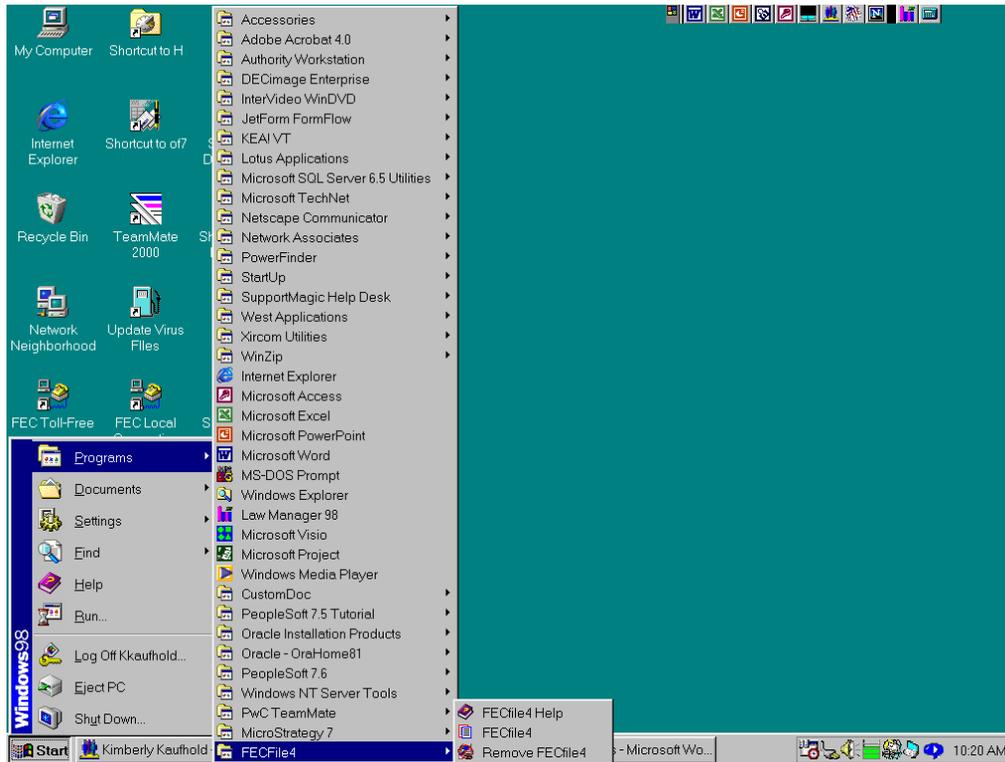
## **Contact information**

Phone: 1-800-424-9530 or local Washington, D.C. 202-694-1100

Reports Analysis Division—Reporting Questions

NIC—Technical Questions

## Starting FECFile and Retrieving the Candidate Database



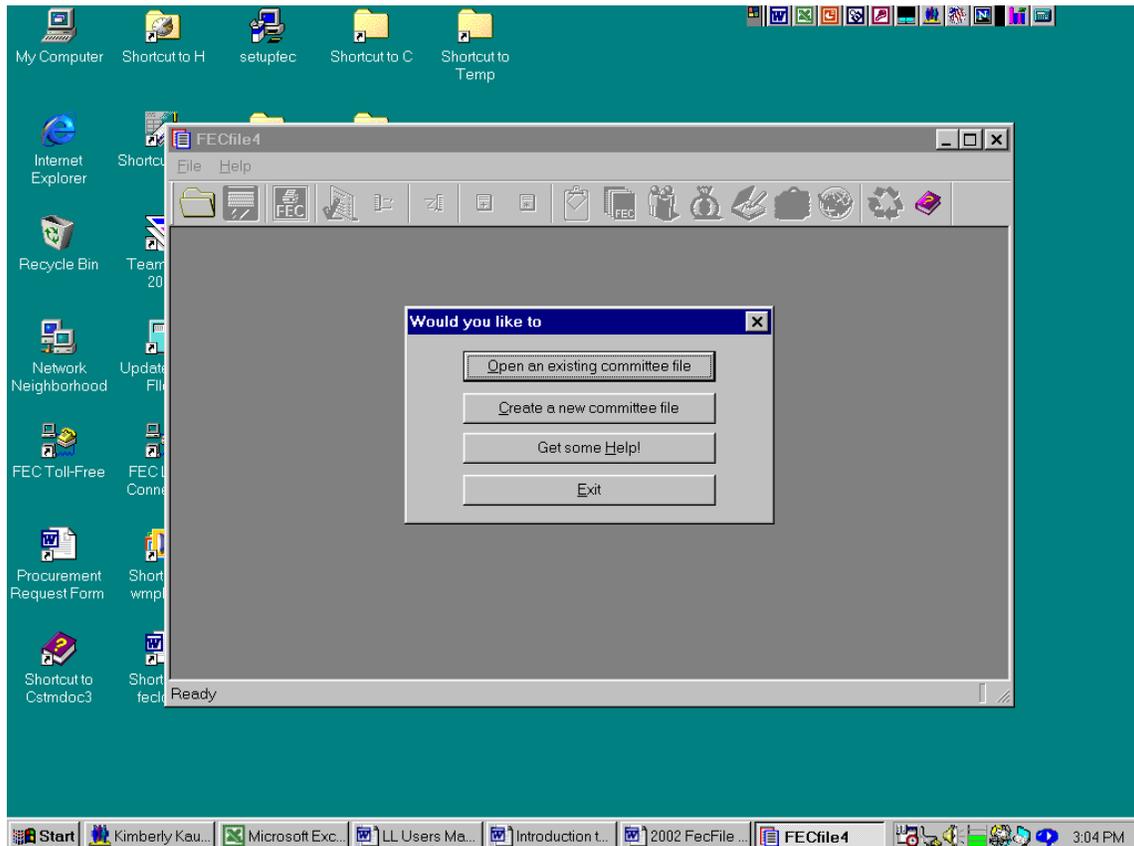
### Opening FECFile

To open the FECFILE application, you must launch the software application.

1. Click the Start button on the Taskbar and move up to select Programs.
2. Select Programs and then move across, highlighting FECFile.
3. Select FECFile, from the menu selection.
4. The application will launch, and FECFile will open.
5. The application will prompt the user for the operation needed to perform, or select File Open, choosing the candidate database.

## Getting Started with FECFile

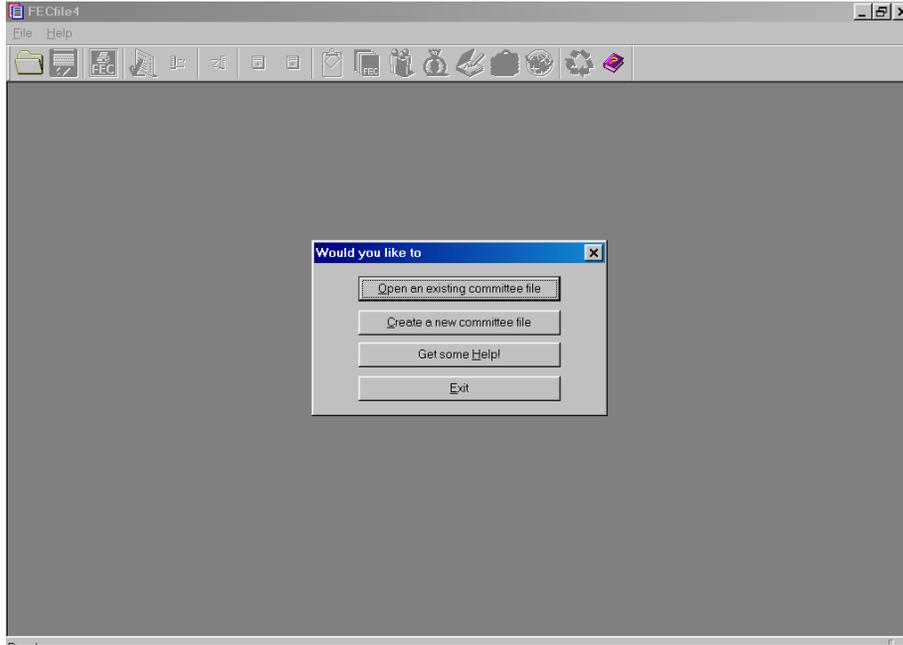
Once launching FECFile, there are several options from which to choose:



- ✓ Open and existing committee file,  
allows the user to access committee information and reports already created and saved
- ✓ Create a new committee file,  
allows the user to create a new committee file where all information and reports for the committee will be stored
- ✓ Getting Some Help  
shows the user a step-by-step diagram of the electronic filing process
- ✓ Exiting,  
closes the application

All of these options will be explained in the following text.

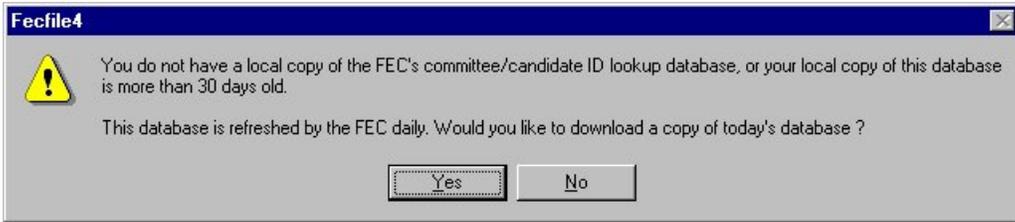
## **Retrieving the Candidate Database**



## **Updating and Downloading the Lookup File**

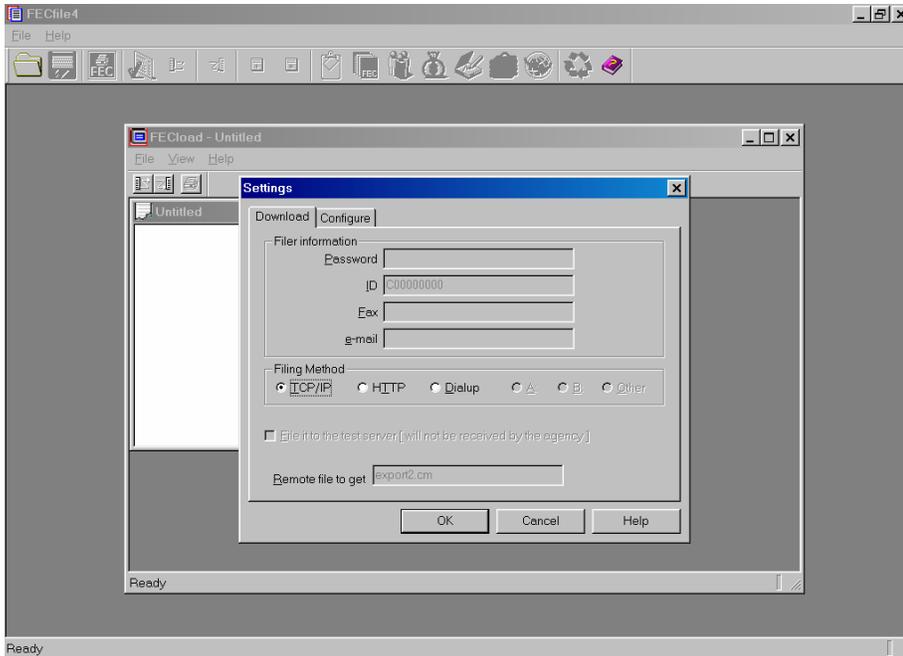
FECFile uses a standard file called a Lookup file to identify, or “lookup” candidate and committee ID information. As part of the ongoing process of assigning these ID’s, the FEC updates the master list and changes it everyday. The FECFile application will notify the user when it is more than 30 days old.

The FEC’s master list is part of the FECFile installation (in a file called export2.cm). The FECFile software is designed to notify the user every 30 days. However, the user may download a recent copy of the file at any time. As the application is initially installed, it is recommended to download a new copy at that time.



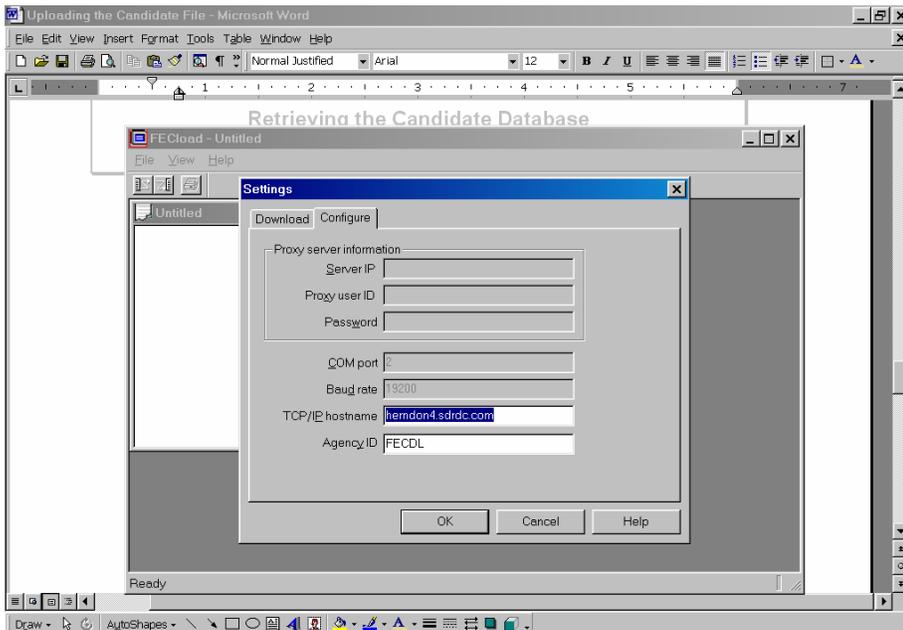
## **Notification**

Upon opening the FECFile application and the user's file, the application will notify asking to download a copy of today's database if the Lookup table is older than 30 days. There are two options here. By selecting No, the file will not be updated but transactions may be entered into FECFile. However, by selecting Yes, the FECLoad Settings window will appear asking to select the filing method (i.e., the communication method used to download the latest file).

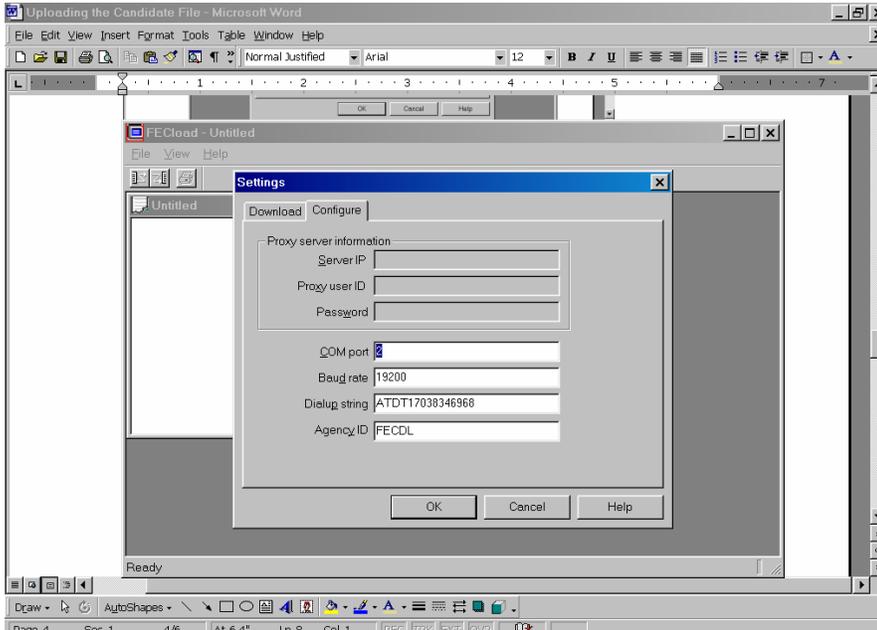


The options are TCP/IP (an Internet connection), HTTP or Dialup (a modem connection) from the Download screen. All other fields on this screen will be inactive (shaded gray). The HTTP connection is an option for those behind a proxy server. The proxy IP address must be entered in the configuration along with the username and password, if applicable.

The configuration screen will vary according to the filing method selected.

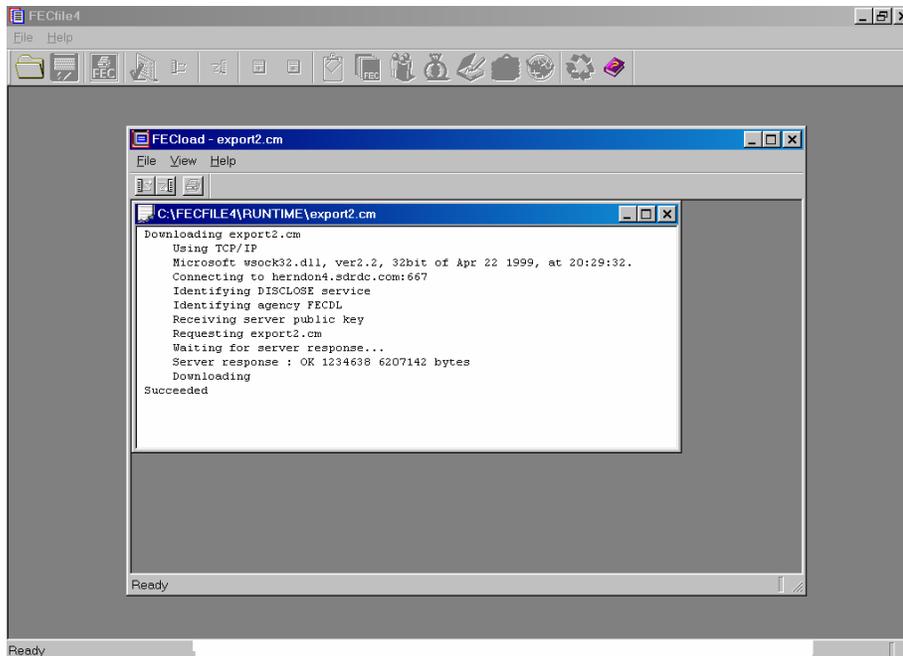


- If TCP/IP is selected on the Download screen, the screen will have **herndon4.sdrdc.com** as the hostname (the name of the server that has the export2.cm file available for download) and the Agency ID will be **FECDL**. Internet connection must be made, prior to the download.

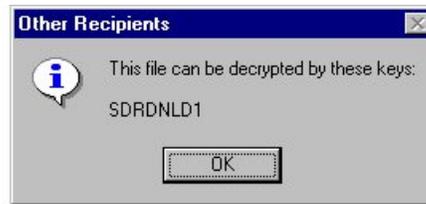


- If *Dialup* is selected from the *Download* screen, the *Configure* screen will have the COM port set as **2**; the Baud rate set as **19200**; the Dialup string as **ATDT17038346968** and Agency ID as **FECDL**.

The COM port is the communication port that runs the computer's modem. If connection cannot be made with this setting, check the comport # attached to your modem in your computers control panel. If a different COM port is used, change the COM port number in this field (possibilities COM port 1, COM port 2, COM port 3 or COM port 4). The same holds true when using a different Baud rate, the settings must change as well. The program defaults to the two settings noted, as they are the most frequently utilized. The Dialup string and Agency ID should not be modified unless instructed by the software's technical support staff, at the number noted in the beginning of this guide.



During the download, the screen will display FECLoad in the upper left corner. Inside FECLoad, a window displays the download results. The program will display several messages, informing it is about to download. The program will pause, state "Requesting export2.cm"; then the process continues. The following message appears, "Server response", and in the bottom right corner, a number displaying the file as it is downloading (the number represents the bytes being transferred). The process speed is dependent upon connectivity. As it is near completion, a window displays it is "Working".



The final dialog box reads, “The file can be decrypted by these keys: SDRDNLD1.”

1. Click OK.