

This file is part of the document FECFile UserManual for PAC's & Party Committees. To learn more about the Federal Election Commission, the Electronic Filing Program, or find the other parts of this document follow the following links, respectively:

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



FECFile User Manual for PAC's & Party 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

10/11/02

Author

Data Systems Training and User Support

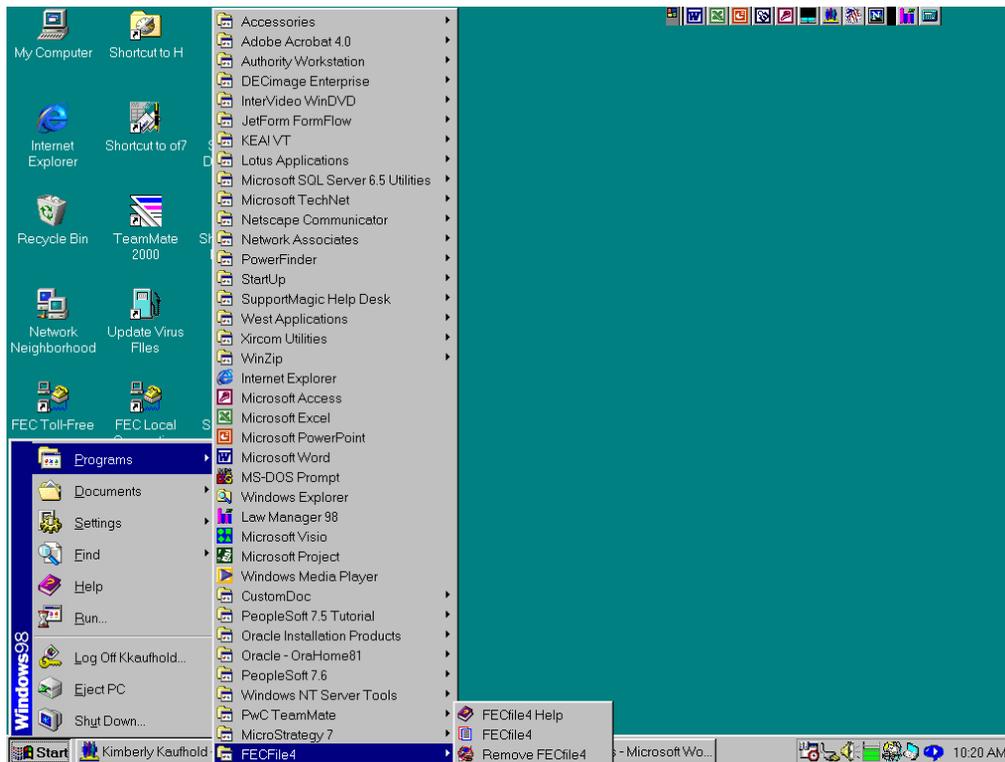
Contact information

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



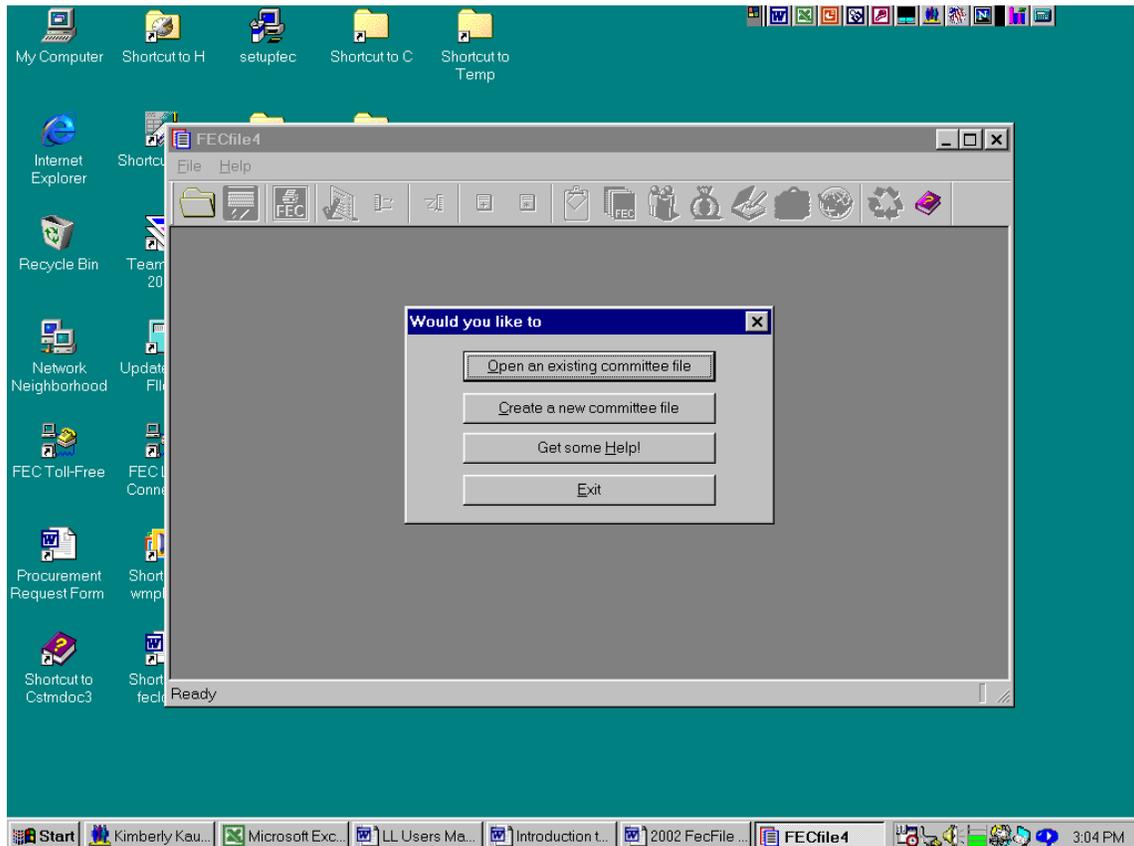
Opening FECFile

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

1. Click the Start button on the Taskbar, continue holding down the mouse button and drag up to select Programs.
2. Select Programs and then drag across, highlighting FECFile.
3. Select FECFile, from the menu selection.
4. The application will launch, and FECFile will open.
5. The application will now prompt the user for the type of operation needed to perform.

Getting Started with FECFile

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



- ✓ Open an 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

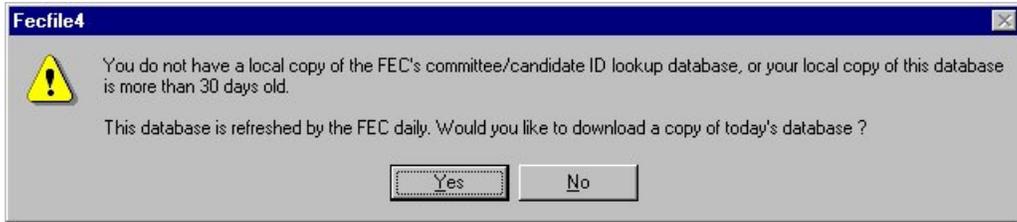
All of these options will be explained in the following text.

Retrieving the Candidate Database

Updating and Uploading the Lookup File

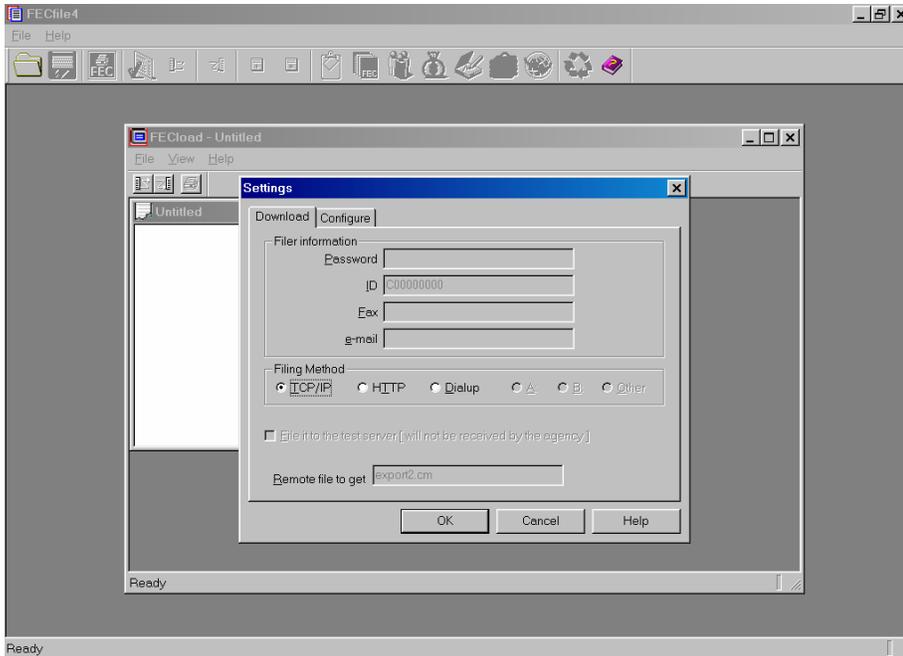
FECFile uses a standard file called a Lookup file to identify, or “lookup” candidate and committee ID information. As part of the ongoing process of assigning these ID’s, the FEC updates the master list and changes it everyday. The FECFile application will notify the user when it is more than 30 days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



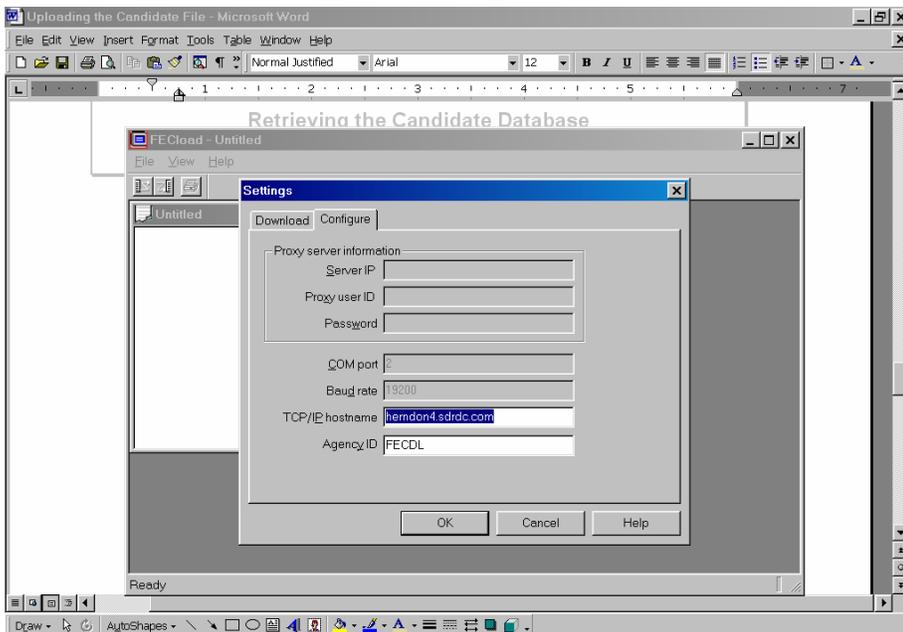
Notification

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).

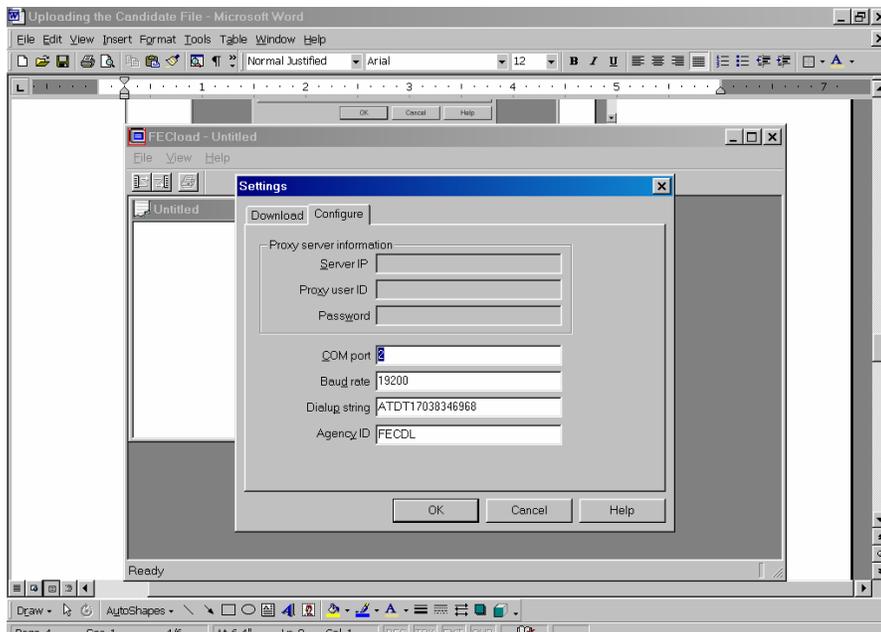


The options are TCP/IP (an Internet connection) or Dialup (a modem connection) from the Download screen. All other fields on this screen will be inactive (shaded gray).

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

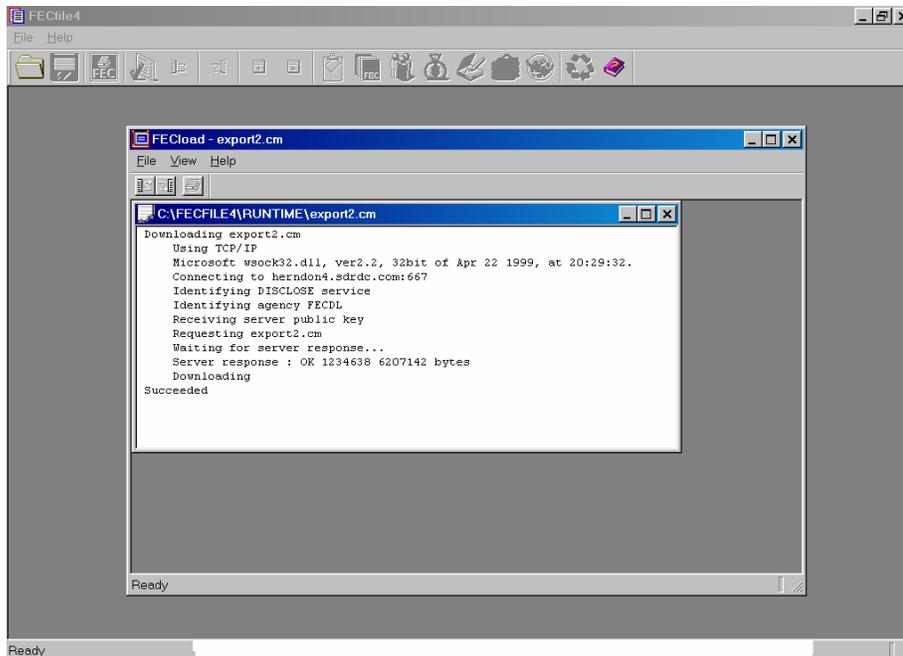


- If TCP/IP is selected on the Download screen, the screen will have **herndon4.sdrdc.com** as the hostname (the name of the server that has the export2.cm file available for download) and the Agency ID will be **FECDL**. Internet connection must be made, prior to the download.



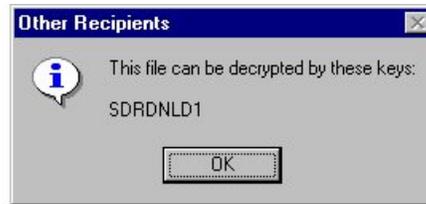
- If *Dialup* is selected from the *Download* screen, the *Configure* screen will have the COM port set as **2**; the Baud rate set as **19200**; the Dialup string as **ATDT17038346968** and Agency ID as **FECDL**.

The COM port is the communication port that runs the computer's modem. If connection cannot be made with this setting, or 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.



1. When selecting OK from the settings screen, the application will ask where to save the Lookup file (export2.cm). The software defaults to the location where the program is installed. It is critical to save this file to the same location as the program. The file will default to export2.cm. Do not change the name of this file.
2. Click OK.
3. If asked “do you want to replace the existing file?”, click Yes. The download process will begin. It may take several minutes depending on the speed of the modem and/or quality of the Internet connection.

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."

4. Click OK.

A dialog box informs FECLoad is "Working", followed by the word "Succeeded" as the last line on the screen.