FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The Basics of Encryption

What algorithms are used in EP Folders?   What are their bit lengths?

Why should I use encryption?

What is Encryption Plus® for Folders?

What is encryption "on-the-fly?"

What is blowfish?

What is the RSA Public/Private key?

How is it possible to share protected folders among users?

Administrator Program Troubleshooting Questions

I deleted EP Folders by deleting all (or some) of the files from the Program Files\EPFolders and Common Files\ eplusfolders directories, but now I can't reinstall EP Folders.   I also receive an error message that EP Folders is already installed even though I can't see the folders.

How do I create user installation disks?

Can I make the user installation available on a network drive?

Who selects folders for protection?

Does changing the administrator password affect users' passwords?

Can I log on to user's computers with my administrator password?

Can I change the User Settings on a workstation without creating new installation disks?

How do I run the one-time password program?

User Program Troubleshooting Questions

Why do I get an error message that looks like my system has crashed when I try to open from Windows Explorer a Word document in a protected folder?

Can I protect just one file in a folder?

Are subfolders protected?

Are there any folders that I cannot protect?

How do I know which folders I have protected?

When are my files and folders protected?

What happens when I copy a protected folder into an unprotected folder? To a floppy? To a network drive?

Can anyone copy, delete, or modify files that I have protected?

What screensavers can I use with Screen Lock?

How do I change my password?

What are the rules for renaming protected folders?

Why can't I activate the Screen Lock feature?

Occasionally I can't access protected folders on removable media that another user gave me....

Error Messages

Why do I receive an error that says the EP Folders device driver is not in memory?

I am receiving an error that says the folder specified is a system or program folder.

I am receiving an error that says "the folder you selected was already encrypted as a subfolder by you or another user."

I am receiving an error that says the user cannot be removed from the EP Folders User List.

I am receiving an error that says there is another PC Guardian screensaver running and the EP Folders screensaver will not run.

I am receiving an error that says EP Folders cannot open the file epfpfd10.mdb.

The Basics of Encryption

What algorithms are used in EP Folders?   What are their bit lengths?

EP Folders uses two algorithms: a 192-bit Blowfish algorithm to encrypt the data, and a secure 1024-bit RSA public/private key algorithm to encrypt user passwords.   The RSA algorithm provides the ability for key recovery and enables the administrator to read encrypted data.

{button Back,JI(`',`The_basics_of_encryption')}

Why should I use encryption?

Encryption is the transformation of data into an unreadable form. Its purpose is to ensure privacy by scrambling data so that only the person with the correct password may decrypt and read it. You should use encryption if you have files that you want to remain private.

Encryption uses a mathematical formula to encrypt data. In order to decrypt the data, you must enter the correct password. PC Guardian's EP Folders combines the power and security of encryption with an easy-to-use, transparent and effective application.

{button Back,JI(`',`The_basics_of_encryption')}

What is Encryption Plus® for Folders?

PC Guardian's Encryption Plus® for Folders combines the efficiency and security of on-the-fly encryption with the flexibility of the Windows 95/98 or Windows NT operating environment.   Encryption Plus® for Folders provides a safe and simple way to select individual folders for protection.   Protection means that designated folders are encrypted on the hard drive.   As files contained in the folders are accessed, they are decrypted on-the-fly with no user intervention.   Files are re-encrypted as they are written back to the hard drive.   Unauthorized users cannot access or modify protected folders.

{button Back,JI(`',`The_basics_of_encryption')}

What is encryption on-the-fly?

Encryption on-the-fly means that the data on the hard disk is decrypted only as it enters the computer's memory. With EP Folders, you select the folders you want to protect. As you access files within your protected folders, EP Folders' encryption/decryption engine transparently decrypts data before it is loaded into your computer's memory. Before data is written back to the hard disk it is automatically re-encrypted.

EP Folders is the only true on-the-fly encryption product. Other products that claim to be on-the-fly decrypt an entire file and load it into memory, creating significant security risks. EP Folders is smarter and more secure because it decrypts only the specific portion of a file that is in use.

{button Back,JI(`',`The_basics_of_encryption')}

What is Blowfish?

Blowfish is a speedy, well-documented algorithm developed by Bruce Schneier. EP Folders is available in a 56-bit block cipher, and a 192-bit version that is available for use in the U.S., Canada, and selected foreign countries.

{button Back,JI(`',`The_basics_of_encryption')}

What is the RSA Public/Private key?

The RSA Public/Private key is a mathematically generated algorithm that depends on the use of very large numbers to not only encrypt data, but to also provide authentication (a way of ensuring that encrypted data was protected by a certain user).   The user's Public key gets encrypted along with the data being protected.   EP Folders stores all Public keys in a database, thereby keeping track of who protected what and granting access to protected data when a user's Public key and the Public key encrypted with the data matches.

{button Back,JI(`',`The_basics_of_encryption')}

How is it possible to share protected folders among users?

Each user that has authorization to share protected folders can do so because the user's Public key is encrypted with the folder when it is protected.   Therefore, it is the Public key that allows for the sharing of protected folders.

{button Back,JI(`',`The_basics_of_encryption')}

Administrator Program Troubleshooting Questions

I deleted EP Folders by deleting all (or some) of the files from the Program Files\EPFolders and Common Files\eplusfolders directories, but now I can't reinstall EP Folders.   I also receive an error message that EP Folders is already installed even though I can't see the folders.

When you try to reinstall EP Folders you will have received an error message stating you have an existing EP Folder program already installed, or if you try to uninstall from Add/Remove Programs from the Windows Control Panel, you will receive an error message that there are missing files.   There is a workaround to be used for either the Administrator program or the User program to solve this problem:

Administrator program workaround: The best way to recover the program files requires access to another computer.   Install EP Folders on a different computer, then copy the program files, from both the Program Files\ EPFolders and Common Files\eplusfolders directories, over to the computer that has the deleted EP Folders program.   Once you do this, you can copy the Administrator program backup file (epfadmin.mdb) from the original computer (from the secure location you saved the backup file to when you installed the Administrator program for the first time) into the Program Files\EPFolders directory.   You can then recover the Administrator program with its original Administrator Password, and recover any User Passwords with the One-Time Password program.

Note: If you deleted the epfadmin.mdb backup file when deleting the EP Folders program files, you will be unable to access user's workstations, or recover User Passwords with the One-Time Password program, that were installed from the User Install disks that you created with your old Administrator Password.

User program workaround: Follow the workaround for the Administrator program by installing EP Folders onto a different computer and then copying the EP Folders program files to the computer with the deleted EP Folders program.   Once you do this, your User Name and Password is recovered plus any encrypted folders that you may have.

In future, whenever you wish to uninstall EP Folders, you should use the Add/Remove Programs option from the Windows Control Panel.   If you still receive the error messages, then you should contact your help desk if the problem exists in the EP Folders User program, or PC Guardian technical support if the problem exists in the EP Folders Administrator program.

{button Back,JI(`',`administrator_s_troubleshooting')}

How do I create user installation disks?

The EP Folders Administrator creates user install disks.   From the EP Folders Administrator Program Main menu, click User Install Wizard.   EP Folders will walk you through the steps necessary to create the install disks, which includes selecting from several setup options and initializing the install disks with the RSA Public/Privacy key.   User install disks can be distributed on floppy disks, or you can copy the files to a network directory accessible to the user.   For detailed instructions, see the help topic Creating User Install Disks

{button Back,JI(`',`administrator_s_troubleshooting')}

Can I make the user installation available on a network drive?

The EP Folders Administrator can create user install disks and save them to a folder on a network.   Users can then copy the install disks from the network to their workstation and proceed with installing EP Folders.

{button Back,JI(`',`administrator_s_troubleshooting')}

Who selects folders for protection?

Each user determines what folders are to be protected or unprotected.   Once a user has successfully logged into the EP Folders User program, they are fully authorized to select folders for protection or unprotection from the Protected Folders dialog box.

{button Back,JI(`',`administrator_s_troubleshooting')}

Does changing the Administrator Password affect users' passwords?

You may change your Administrator Password at any time and it will not affect the program installation on users' workstations.   However, if you need to access protected folders on a user's workstation, you will need to use the Administrator Password that was used when the user install disks were created for that user's workstation.

{button Back,JI(`',`administrator_s_troubleshooting')}

Can I log on to user's computers with my administrator password?

The Administrator Password can be used to gain access to protected folders on a user's workstation.   At the user's workstation, log on as "Administrator" for the user name and enter your Administrator Password at the password prompt.   Local Administrators may do the same, but must use "LocalAdmin" as the user name and then enter their Local Administrator Password.

{button Back,JI(`',`administrator_s_troubleshooting')}

Can I change the User Settings on a workstation without creating new installation disks?

Yes, if you log on to the user's workstation with your administrator name and password, you can change their user settings.   From the EP Folders Main menu of the user's installation, select User Settings and make any changes from the available setting options.

{button Back,JI(`',`administrator_s_troubleshooting')}

How do I run the one time password program?

The One-Time Password program is initiated at the user's workstation.   After three unsuccessful login attempts, EP Folders will display the Invalid Login screen.   The user then clicks the One-Time Password button that will display a One-Time Password key, which they must communicate to the EP Folders Administrator.   At the EP Folders Administration program, the administrator clicks Password Recovery and enters the One-Time Password key as prompted.   The administrator then clicks Restore to generate a 24-character One-Time Password.   The administrator gives this One-Time Password to the user, who then enters it into the One-Time Password screen at their workstation.   Once the password is entered, the user clicks Restore to view their original password.

{button Back,JI(`',`administrator_s_troubleshooting')}

User Program Troubleshooting Questions

Why do I get an error message that looks like my system has crashed when I try to open from Windows Explorer a Word document in a protected folder?

This problem only occurs on NT systems with a FAT partition.   It is part of EP Folders' security control to disable opening documents by double-clicking them from Windows Explorer.   Although this is normal operation for all platforms, for NT systems that have a FAT partition, a second error message is produced which makes it appear as if your computer has crashed when in fact it hasn't.   There should be a fix for this in a future release.

{button Back,JI(`',`user_troubleshooting')}

Can I protect just one file in a folder?

For more effective management of your encrypted files, EP Folders was designed to automatically encrypt all the files in a folder selected for encryption.   We suggest that you create specific folders for protection, and then save sensitive files inside of these protected folders.   If you create a file outside of a protected folder and later decide that you want to encrypt this file, simply copy it into the protected folder and it will automatically be encrypted.

{button Back,JI(`',`user_troubleshooting')}

Are subfolders protected?

You have the option of protecting subfolders when you are adding a folder to the Protected Folders list.   Click the Protect Subfolder box when confirming the addition of your folder to the Protected Folders list.

{button Back,JI(`',`user_troubleshooting')}

Are there any folders that I cannot protect?

EP Folders will not permit you to protect folders that, when encrypted, might inhibit the operation of your system. These are:
- Entire drives, such as the C:, D: and A: drives
- The Windows directory and its subdirectories
- The Program Files directory and its subdirectores
- C:\Temp directory (NT systems only)

{button Back,JI(`',`user_troubleshooting')}

#How do I know which folders I have protected?

Once you have successfully logged onto EP Folders, you can easily view a list of your protected folders.   At the EP Folders Main menu, click Protected Folders.   Protected folders that you have access to will be listed in the Protected Folders List.   For more information, see the online help topic "Viewing Protected Folders."

{button Back,JI(`',`user_troubleshooting')}

When are my files and folders protected?

If a folder has been added to the EP Folders Protected Folders list, it remains protected at all times except for when any part of the data contained in the protected folder is written into your computer's memory.   Files that are copied to a protected folder will be automatically encrypted as well.

{button Back,JI(`',`user_troubleshooting')}

What happens when I copy a file from a protected folder into an unprotected folder?   To a floppy disk?   To a network drive?

If you are logged onto EP Folders, any file you copy or move from a protected folder to an unprotected location will automatically be decrypted.   Caution should be used when copying/moving files from a protected folder.   If EP Folders is not running and you copy or move a file from a protected folder to one that is not, it will not unencrypt and will in fact be scrambled.

{button Back,JI(`',`user_troubleshooting')}

Can anyone copy, delete or modify files that I have protected?

Only the user who protected the folder, and any users with sharing privileges on the workstation that contains the protected folder, can access folders that have been protected.   Any user who has authorized access to protected folders must first log on to EP Folders with their user name and password.   If an unauthorized user starts your computer and does not log on to EP Folders, they will not be able to access in any way the information contained within the protected folder.

{button Back,JI(`',`user_troubleshooting')}

What screensavers can I use with Screen Lock?

You can use any standard Windows screensaver with EP Folder's Screen Lock feature.   Screensaver files must reside in the C:\Windows\System folder and be configured with the .scr extension in order to appear as a selection in the Screensaver Settings dialog box.

{button Back,JI(`',`user_troubleshooting')}

How do I change my password?

To change your password, click Change Password on the EP Folders Main menu.   EP Folders will then prompt you for your old password, your new password, and to verify your new password.   Be sure to write down your password and store it in a safe place.

{button Back,JI(`',`user_troubleshooting')}

What are the rules for renaming protected folders?

EP Folders' renaming protocol has been set up so that protected folders, and any folder above it (protected or unprotected) all the way to the root directory, cannot be renamed.   The following are examples of what folders can and cannot be renamed:

Parent folder and its subfolders are protected: You can rename the protected subfolders, but the protected parent folder cannot be renamed.

Parent folder is protected, but its subfolders are not protected: You can rename the subfolders, but you cannot rename the protected parent folder.

Parent folder is NOT protected, but its subfolders are: You cannot rename either the unprotected parent folder or its protected subfolders.

You have two workaround options: the first is to unprotect your folder, rename it, and then protect it again.

The second option is to protect the folder above the protected folder that you are trying to rename (this option only works if there is a folder above the protected folder).   The original protected folder now becomes a protected subfolder and EP Folders permits the renaming of protected subfolders of protected folders.

{button Back,JI(`',`user_troubleshooting')}

Why can't I activate the Screen Lock feature?

There are two possibilities as to why this function will not work.   The first is that your workstation may be an NT workstation.   The screen lock feature is not available to Windows NT users.

The second possibility is that your administrator may have disabled the Screen Lock function (for EP Folders Enterprise versions only).

{button Back,JI(`',`user_troubleshooting')}

Occasionally I can't access protected folders on removable media that another user gave me.   Even after the user who sent me the removable media uprotected the folders and gave me the removable media again, I still can't access the files.

This problem occurs when the sender of the removable media did not use the Ship option (which assigns a password to the protected folders).   Therefore, even if the recipient uses the Receive option (which is the correct procedure when sharing protected folders amongst EP Folders users), EP Folders will recognize that the folders are protected, and also recognize that the folders were protected on another workstation.   EP Folders will then deny the recipient access to the protected folders.

EP Folders records the attempt to access the removable media by storing this information in its database.   This means that, even if the protected folders are unprotected and the recipient again tries to access the folders, EP Folders will still think the folders are protected unless the recipient uses the Notify System option. Which will update the EP Folders database, granting the user access to the unprotected folders.

To prevent this problem from occurring in the future, senders of removable media that will be shared with other EP Folders users must use the Ship option, assigning a password to the protected folders.   The recipient must then use Receive to scan the removable media for protected folders, providing the password before their Protected Folders list can be updated.

The Notify System feature should be used by the person who has stored protected folders on removable media, and then later wishes to access those protected folders.   They would then notify the system that new removable media has been inserted so it can be scanned for protected folders.

Ship and Receive are to be used when users wish to share protected folders on removable media amongst themselves.

{button Back,JI(`',`user_troubleshooting')}

Errors

Why do I receive an error that says the EP Folders device driver is not in memory?

First try rebooting your computer.   If this does not solve the problem, you will have to re-install EP Folders.

Re-installing EP Folders:

1. Before uninstalling the EP Folders program, copy the following .mdb files to another location on your hard drive, a floppy disk, or another safe location.

    epfpfd10.mdb
    eplusbak.mdb

    Important: Keep track of the location that you temporarily store these .mdb files, you will need them later

2. Then follow the instructions outlined in the Uninstalling EP Folders topic in the online help to uninstall the EP Folders program.   You do not need to decrypt your protected folders.

3. Once EP Folders has been removed, you will need to re-install.

4. Install EP Folders as usual, following the instructions given.

    Important: Do not sign on to the user program when prompted

5. Once EP Folders has been re-installed, you will need to copy the .mdb files back into their original folder.

{button Back,JI(`',`Errors')}

I am receiving an error that says the folder I specified is a system or program folder.

EP Folders will not allow you to encrypt certain folders required for the computer to operate.   The following folders and their subfolders cannot be encrypted:
▪   Entire drives, such as the C:, D: and A: drives
▪   The Windows directory and its subdirectories
▪   The Program Files directory and its subdirectores
▪   C:\Temp directory (NT systems only)

{button Back,JI(`',`Errors')}

I am receiving an error that says, "the folder you selected was already encrypted as a subfolder by you or another user."

If a folder has already been encrypted even as a subfolder EP Folders will not allow you to encrypt it again.

Example: User A encrypts Folder A and its subfolders.   User B wishes to encrypt Folder B (a subfolder of Folder A).   User B will receive the above error message.

There are two workarounds for this problem.   The first is for the user who encrypted the folder first (User A in the above example) to share folders with the user trying to encrypt its subfolder (User B in the above example).

The second workaround is to decrypt the folder, and then re-encrypt it without encrypting its subfolders.   The owner of the folder (User A) will need to login into EP Folders to perform this operation.

{button Back,JI(`',`Errors')}

I am receiving an error that says the user cannot be removed from the EP Folders User List.

This problem may indicate that the user database is damaged. If rebooting your computer does not fix the problem, you will need to re-install EP Folders.   Follow the directions located in the Uninstalling EP Folders section of the online help.

Important:This process will remove all users from the EP Folders User list.   Before uninstalling EP Folders, decrypt
          all folders and close the EP Folders program.

{button Back,JI(`',`Errors')}

I am receiving an error that indicates that there is another PC Guardian screensaver running and the EP Folders screensaver will not run.

If you already have Encryption Plus® for Hard Disks (EPHD) installed on your machine, and have the Screen Lock option activated, then EP Folders will not allow you to run the EP Folders Screen Lock program as well.   The EPHD settings will override your EP Folders settings.   However, you will still have a secure screensaver to protect your unattended computer.

{button Back,JI(`',`Errors')}

I am receiving an error that says "EP Folders cannot open the file epfpfd10.mdb".

With this problem you have two options to try.   The first is for you to move the epfpfd10.mdb file to a different location and then reboot your computer.   The epfpfd10.mdb file should then be automatically restored from backup.

If the first option does not resolve your problem your second option would be to open the Windows Explorer program, copy the epfpfd10.mdb file from its current location (C:\Program Files), and place it somewhere else on your hard drive.   Then reboot your computer and put the epfpfd10.mdb file back into its original folder.

{button Back,JI(`',`Errors')}