

Campaign Finance Reporter Technical Bulletin

Backing up Committee Data

General notes:

Backing up data backs up only the committee year that you have open. Committee data is stored in separate databases, one for each year.

Backing up to removable media will erase any existing data on the media. This applies to floppy disks and flash or thumb drives (the small USB drives). The Board has not tested other types of removable media such as zip drives or portable drives.

Many committees use a dedicated flash drive for backup of committee data. Windows XP and Vista recognize these drives automatically. Windows 2000 may require a driver. The Board is unable to provide setup support for flash or other drives.

Backup step-by-step:

1. Open the committee year that you want to backup.
2. Use the File/Committee/Backup menu items.
3. The Backup form will open
The form defaults to backup on the A drive, which is the floppy drive if the computer has one. Most newer computers no longer come with a floppy drive. If you do not have a floppy drive or do not wish to back up to the floppy drive, see the section below on selecting the backup path.
4. Select your backup path by clicking the browse button, then traversing the computer tree structure to find the folder you want to use. If you know the backup path, you may also type it directly into "To:" field. If you want to backup to the root of the C drive, just change the "A:\\" to "C:\\" (without the quotes) in the To field on the backup form. Note that if you backup to the C drive you should then write the files to a CD.
5. Click the OK button to begin the backup.
6. Campaign Finance Reporter will first compress the files to be backed up, then will write them to the backup path. Do not click anything on the form during this process.
7. When the backup is complete, the Backup form will close automatically.

Browsing to select your backup path

1. On the Backup form, Click the Browse button.
2. The "Save As" browse form will open. At the top you will see the "Save in:" box that tells you the current path for saving the file.
3. Click the down arrow at the right end of the "Save in" field.
4. You will see the tree structure for your computer and its disk drives.
5. Click on the drive letter that corresponds to the drive you want to backup to.
6. If you want to backup to a specific folder on that drive, click on the folder name to select it.
7. The drive (and folder if you selected one) path should now be in the "Save in" field.
8. Click the Save button to save the path and return to the Backup form.
9. The selected path should now show in the "To:" field, along with the file name.
10. Do not change the file name. The name, beginning with your committee number and ending with .zip is system created.
11. Continue with step 5 in the Backup Step-by-step instructions above to complete the process.

Backing up to a CD

Windows and Windows applications, including Campaign Finance Reporter, cannot write directly to a CD. (With some systems, it is possible to format a CD for direct writing, however, the Board does not recommend this practice as frequently a CD written using this method cannot be read by another computer, which will be necessary if you have a system failure.)

To backup to a CD it is necessary to write the backup files to a hard drive location first, then write them to a CD.

1. Create a folder on your C drive in a place you will remember. We recommend creating a folder named CFR Backup on the root of the C drive, so the path to the folder would be C:\CFR Backup.
2. Begin the step-by-step backup process above and browse to the folder you created using the Browsing instructions above.
3. Complete the backup to the folder on the C drive.

You may backup multiple committee years to this same folder.

4. You must now write the contents of the folder on the C drive to a CD.
5. On a version of Windows lower than XP Professional, use the CD writing software that came with your computer.
6. On Windows XP Professional or later follow these steps:
 1. In Windows Explorer (outside of Campaign Finance Reporter) browse to the folder where you stored your backup files.
 2. Right click and click "Send To". You should see an entry for a CD drive, often the D drive. Click on the CD drive name to select it.
 3. A message box will pop up at the bottom right of your screen advising that you have files waiting to be written to the CD. Click the Box.
 4. A window will open with the files listed. Click the menu items File and select "Write these items to the CD". The files will be written to the CD.

For questions or additional assistance, or to suggest improvements to this bulletin, call Gary Goldsmith at 651-296-1721 or 800-657-3889.