

# Re: EFS Certificate Needed

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*Source:* <http://www.derkeiler.com/Newsgroups/microsoft.public.security/2007-10/msg00169.html>

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- *From:* "Roger Abell [MVP]" <mvpNoSpam@xxxxxxx>
  - *Date:* Wed, 24 Oct 2007 07:50:30 -0700
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Backup and save on non-degrading media the EFS DRA .pfx file and try to remember its password. That is without doubt the first and most important thing you can do once a DRA has been defined.

For EFS encrypted files in the absence of a DRA, the .pfx on a per user basis can allow for that user being able to get to their EFS encrypted files after a disaster (reformat/install).

Roger

"HonoredWriter" <honoredwriter@xxxxxxx> wrote in message  
<news:A6594C7E-13F0-4477-8BAB-A70E90B5DAEB@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>

Dear GreenieLaBrun;  
Thanks for the information. Some of which I have read. Thanks to all of you guys for your assistance. The other major thing I did to help myself was to make a backup DVD, so I now have a copy of some of the files, not all, to retore. Foe sure I will follow "Windows Recommendations". Thanks.  
--  
HonoredWriter

"GreenieLeBrun" wrote:

HonoredWriter wrote:

Dear Brian and Roger;  
The certificates I have were recently installed days after the files were encrypted. And I think that I am in a no win situation, because I re-installed Windows after the encryption. I should have deciphered the files prior to re-installing Windows. The keys have

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probably been  
discarded/changed. Also I changed the name of the User. It  
was  
foolish of me to believe that I could decrypt files after I had  
re-installed Windows. The files were not deleted because  
they are  
located on another drive and partition. I was pulling for  
straws by  
assuming I could use another certificate to decipher the files.  
Me  
think I will keep one or two of them on my system to remind  
me what  
not to do (smile). Thanks for all of your good help with the  
sharing  
of your knowledge. It is amazing how much smarter one gets  
when one  
makes a foolish mistake. "If any man thinks he is wise let  
him become  
a fool so he can become wise."  
Thanks for your assistance.

One may generate and EFS recovery agent  
.pfx by use of  
the cipher utility with the /r option. See  
cipher /?  
After being installed, that recovery agent  
will only have  
decrypt capabilities on files EFS-touched  
afterwards.

If you believe you already have a recovery  
agent set up  
and it is unable to decrypt EFS files, then  
you probably  
need to use the efsinfo utility to examine the  
thumbprint  
of the files that may not be decrypted, verify  
that the  
account from which you attempt actually has  
the recovery  
agent private key installed within it, etc.

Why is it that you say

The certificates I have are  
not worthy to be Recovery  
Agent  
certificates even though  
their intended purposes are  
clearly

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stated.

?? What is it that you are seeing and how?  
How are you  
attempting to use this (these?) ?

"HonoredWriter"

<honoredwriter@xxxxxxx> wrote in  
message

news:29109205-2BD1-4FB3-9465-1F84B2DAD118@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

How do I obtain a Recovery  
Agent certificate to  
recover/restore/decrypt  
some  
previously encrypted files?  
The certificates I have are  
not worthy  
to be Recovery Agent  
certificates even though  
their intended  
purposes are clearly  
stated. ( Shucks, I'm  
thinking this computer has  
intuitive  
intelligence.) --  
HonoredWriter

If you re-installed Windows AFTER the files were encrypted then, I am  
afraid, you are out of luck as the SID (security Identifier) will have  
changed (see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Security\\_Identifier](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Security_Identifier))

You may like to peruse the following links for more information on the  
EFS

The Encrypting File System

<http://www.microsoft.com/technet/security/topics/cryptographyetc/efs.mspx>

Best practices for the Encrypting File System

<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/223316/en-us>

How to back up the recovery agent Encrypting File System (EFS) private  
key

in Windows Server 2003, in Windows 2000, and in Windows XP

<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/241201>

How To Encrypt a Folder in Windows XP

<http://support.microsoft.com/?id=308989>

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How To Remove File Encryption in Windows XP

<http://support.microsoft.com/?id=308993>

How To Encrypt a File in Windows XP

<http://support.microsoft.com/?id=307877>