

CHAPTER 2 – INTRODUCTION TO FIREPRO 2

FirePro 2 is all about information management. Technically, it is a database application that has been designed specifically for fire departments -- but you can think of it as a very smart electronic filing system. The program allows you to enter information with great efficiency, instantly retrieve specific records, produce dozens of standard and customized reports, and even manage your budget.

This introductory chapter primarily provides the FP2 user with an introduction to some of the more technical aspects of FP2. This includes the following:

- 2.10 – Database Basics**
- 2.20 – Technical Support**
- 2.30 – Installing Fonts**
- 2.40 – Installing Updates**
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Database Basics

On each of FirePro 2's many windows, there are defined physical spaces known as fields. Each field has a descriptive title (such as name or location). Each piece of information that you enter goes into a specific field. The currently active field is outlined in black when in Add/Edit mode.

A group of fields taken together comprises a "record", (e.g., all the fields pertaining to an item of inventory). FirePro 2 accommodates records on properties, inspections, inventory, firefighters, standby assignments, training, incident reports, payroll, budgets, fire hydrants, operational guidelines, etc.

Many of these areas are integrated, meaning that information entered in one record will be simultaneously recognized by another related record.

The entire database is stored on your computer's hard drive.

Technical Support

In the event that you are unable to resolve a question or problem with the use of this manual, please call Ingenious Software at (250) 352-9495, or e-mail: fireprotech@ingenioussoftware.com .

In response to the ever-changing needs of fire departments, FirePro 2 continues to evolve. As a registered user with a service contract, you will receive updates of both this manual and the program.

We invite your comments and suggestions regarding FirePro 2 and this user manual.

Installing Fonts

The FirePro 2 program requires four specific fonts in order to work correctly. When you initially purchase FirePro, these fonts will automatically install on your computer. If you need to re-install the fonts at any point, the following directions will guide you through the necessary steps.

The four required fonts are located on the original CD sent to you at the time of sale. They will be in a folder entitled, "Fonts". Contact us at tech support if you cannot locate this folder, and we will email the fonts to you. Save the fonts to your FirePro folder as required, then follow these steps for installation:

1. Click on the Start Menu.
2. Select Settings and click on Control Panel.
3. This will take you to the Explorer Window. A folder entitled "Fonts" will be on the right side of the screen. Double click on this.
4. The window that comes up will be another Explorer Window that will be exploring Fonts. Choose "Install New Font" from the file menu.
5. Under Folders, select the location where you saved the Fonts in your FirePro folder.
6. Choose the "Select All" button, and then click "OK"

Note:

In Windows XP, the process for installation is slightly altered. Click on the Start Menu, Select Control Panel, and click on, "Select Classic View" to access the Fonts folder on the right side of your screen. Complete steps 4-6 as above.

Note:

Font installation is not necessary for Macintosh users.

Note:

Some of the common indicators that fonts need to be re-installed are:

Fonts appear too large on your screen

Passwords appear as letters and/or numbers instead of dots.

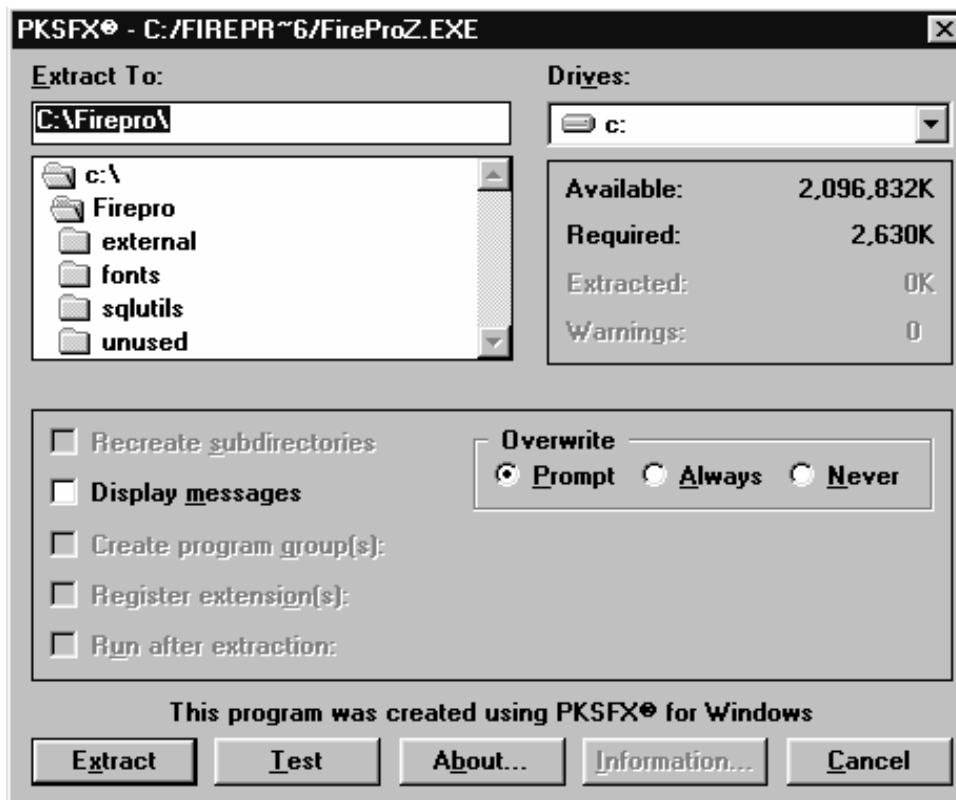
For additional information, please refer to Chapter **50** –Frequently Asked Questions

Installing Updates

Updates are sent out from time to time by email. The attachment is compressed into a zip or exe file with the version number in it's name. Normally you will only need to run this update on the computer that stores FirePro 2 (usually in a folder called Firepro).

Before installing a new version quit FirePro 2 and backup both the FirePro2.lbs file and your data file which is usually named "your town".df1.

When you open this attachment you will get the following window:



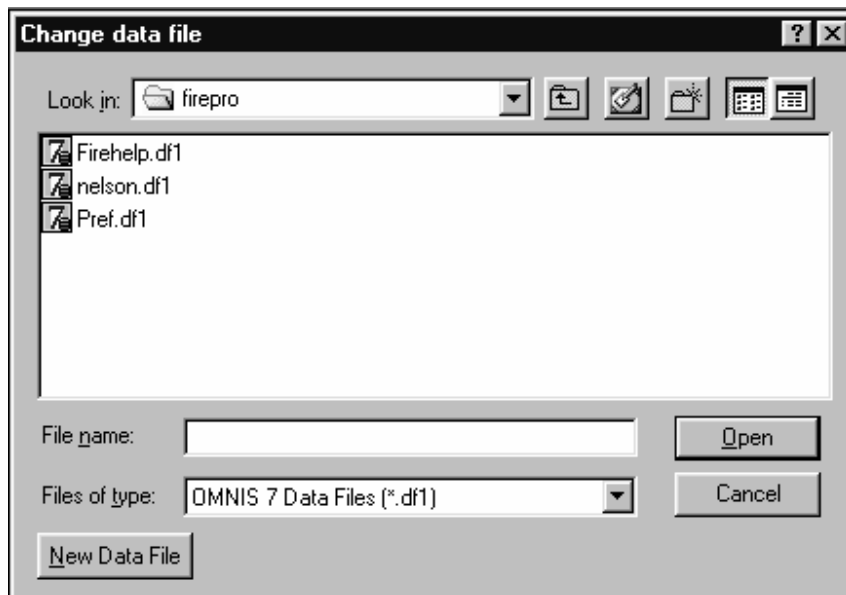
EXTRACT TO

This field is defaulted to C:\FirePro\, which will work in most situations. Check with technical support for any questions about this.

EXTRACT

Click the Extract button and you will be asked if you want to replace the existing file of the same name. Respond with "Yes".

After completing the extraction process, start up FirePro 2 and you will be presented with the following window:



Information entered here will tell the program where your data file is. If your data file is stored on your computer, change the Look in: folder to FirePro. To do this you will probably need to change it to C: first and then choose the FirePro folder. Now choose your data file. It is named "your town".df1.

NOTE:

The file named "your town" .df1 is the data file that is named for your town/city's fire department. In the case of our above example, our data file is name "nelson.df1") Do not select Firehelp or Pref.

If your data file is stored on a server or another computer, you will need to find the correct path to it using the Look in: box. Once you can see your data file, open it.

WARNING:

Never click the NEW DATA FILE button as this will create a new data file, which will not work for you. If this is done accidentally and you save a new data file, quit the program, find that data file and delete it.

Sending FirePro 2 data files via e-mail

Occasionally, telephone support may not be sufficient to resolve your technical questions. In this case you may be asked to send our tech-support team data files from your fire department via e-mail. Condensing your data files will minimize the time it will take to receive them at the other end, and offers a more secure system for sending them. The following procedure will condense your data file(s) in preparation for sending them as e-mail attachments:

If you have the WinZip program, open it. If you think you have the program but are not sure of its location, go to the Start menu and choose Find, and then Files and Folders. In the Find window with the Name and Location Tab displayed, enter, "WinZip" in the Named field and choose My Computer in the Look In field. Click Find Now.

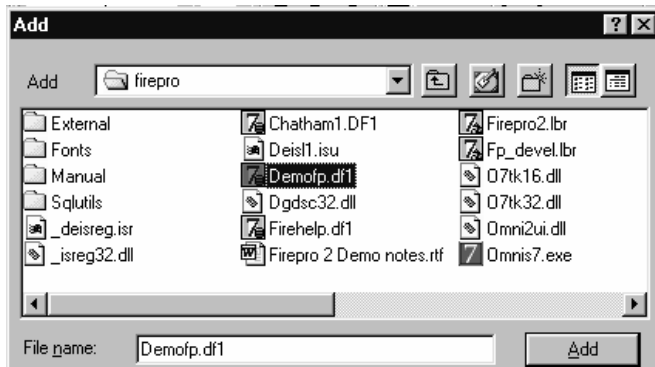
If you do not have WinZip installed on your computer you can download a demo from the internet at www.WinZip.com. You may wish to purchase the program once you establish its usefulness to you. The process of installing WinZip on your computer will approximate the following:

- Agree to the terms outlined in the Licensing window of WinZip.
- With the WinZip window displayed, click on New. This will display the New Archive window.
- From the New Archive window you will choose the storage location for the condensed Zip file you are about to create. To access a drop-down list of storage choices available in your computer, choose the arrow to the right of the Create field and double click on your choice. This is the location from which you will send your e-mail attachment, so you may want to make a note of this path.
- Locate the File Name field on the bottom half of the New Archive window and insert the name you wish to call this condensed file. You will likely want to include the name of your fire department in the file name. Click OK.



- The Add window displays. You now need to find the file you want to include in your attachment. Check that you have exited FirePro before proceeding with the next step. Clicking on the arrow to the right of the Add field will display a drop-down list. You will usually be sending the data file called, <yourcity>.df1. This is generally found in C: drive in your Firepro folder, unless you use a server, in

which case it will be in the server's Firepro folder. Double click on the file once you have located it (or click once on the file and once on the Add button).



- To include additional files in this new Zip file, click on the Add button in the “WinZip – (whatever you have called your file)” window. This will take you back to the Add window, where you can choose another file to insert in the Add field. Exit this window by clicking on “x”.
- Open a new e-mail Message. Select the Insert Attachment option. This may be represented by a picture of a paperclip, or you may find it through the File Menu under Insert. Use the drop-down list to locate your new Zip file (as saved in Step 4), and double click on it. An icon of your file will appear on the bottom of your e-mail message.

Backing up your Data

Backing up your data is very important!

It is essential that you have a working copy of your data files should your hard drive crash, or your computer made inoperable for any reason. Any other files to do with FirePro 2 can be replaced, but the data files are unique to your department. The main data file is called <yourtown>.df1 (where "Your Town" could be Chatham or Nelson etc., but it will always have the file extension .df1 – the only exception is if you have extensions turned off; in that case it will just be <yourtown>). If you use pictures or links, there are folders called "Pictures" and another called "Links". These should also be backed up. These are large files so we do not recommend backing them up to floppy disks.

Some alternative places for you to back it up are:

- another computer (possibly your town's server)
- another hard disk
- a tape drive
- a CD/DVD (with a CD/DVD writer)

We advise that you keep a couple of backups and not just your most recent one, as sometimes a backup can be corrupt and having the previous one will be very valuable.

Back up Frequency

Larger departments with daily changes to data should back up daily. Smaller departments who make less frequent changes may only need to back up weekly. A good question to ask is "How much data would I be willing to loose?" The answer will tell you how often you should backup your data.

Note:

As an extra measure, feel free to send your data file to our office on a regular basis (once per month would be good) and we will hold on to it for you until you send the next one. You would need to send it in .zip format for efficiency's sake. If this option appeals to you let us know, so that we can properly store your data file.

We do not charge for this service nor take responsibility for your data being here. But as a last resource we should have it available for you.