

FP2 - TIP 'O THE WEEK

BACKING UP YOUR DATA



Backup Strategies

Backing up your data is very important! Backing up your data is very important. No, that's not a typo; I purposefully said it twice as 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 fairly easily, but the data files are unique to your department.

The main data file is called <yourtown>.df1 (where "Your Town" could be Okotoks or Nelson etc., but it will always have the file extension .df1). 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 (with a CD 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. Doug uses a portable hard drive to back up our files here (approximate cost is \$200 each). They connect by USB port and are very easy to use. We keep one off site and one on site and swap them each week. We also use an automatic backup system that kicks in every night, so we get 5 back-ups a week.

How often should you back up your data? That really depends on your department. 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.

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.

I hope these suggestions are helpful to you. Give us a call or drop an email if you'd like to discuss this further, or if you wish to take us up on the offer to store a back-up for you.

Have a wonderful week!



Quote of the week:

"A true friend is someone who thinks that you are a good egg even though he knows that you are slightly cracked." *Bernard Meltzer*