

## How To Encrypt a File using Windows Explorer and WinZip

For Use With All PII Data

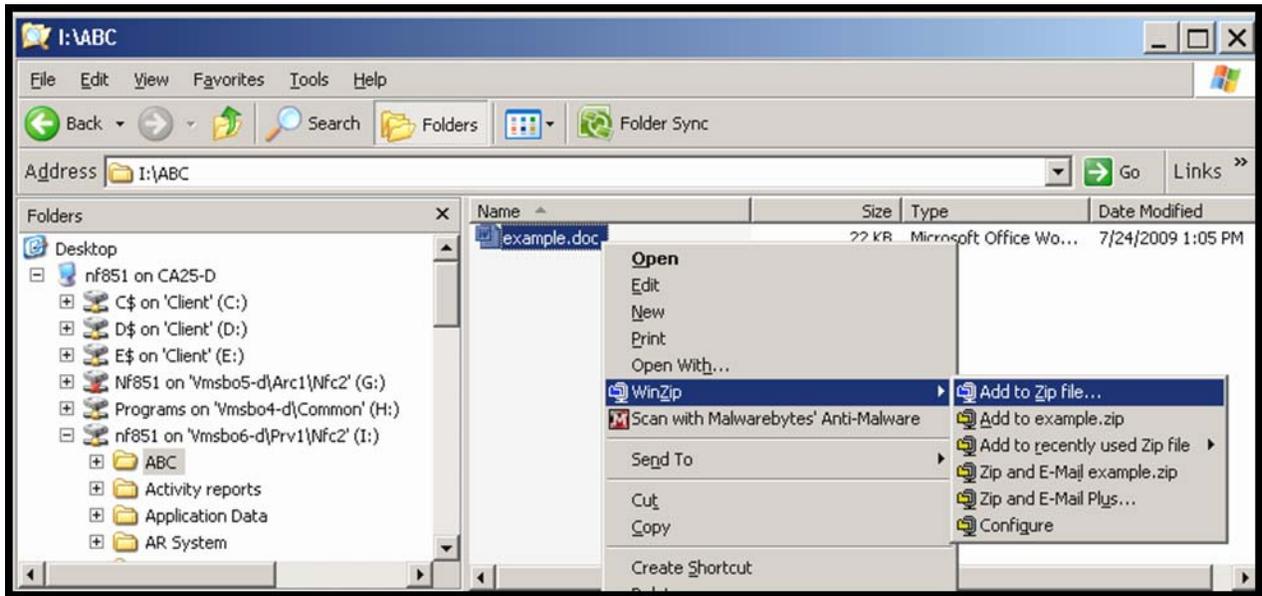
**As an employee or a contractor, you share in the responsibility for protecting the privacy of individuals whose information you access. It is the policy of the Department of Agriculture to protect personal, financial, and employment information from unauthorized disclosure. Customers and employees have the right to expect that you will collect, maintain, use, and disseminate personally identifiable information (PII) and data only as authorized by law and as necessary to carry out official business.**

**NFC's policy is to encrypt all PII information before being transmitted either internally or externally.**

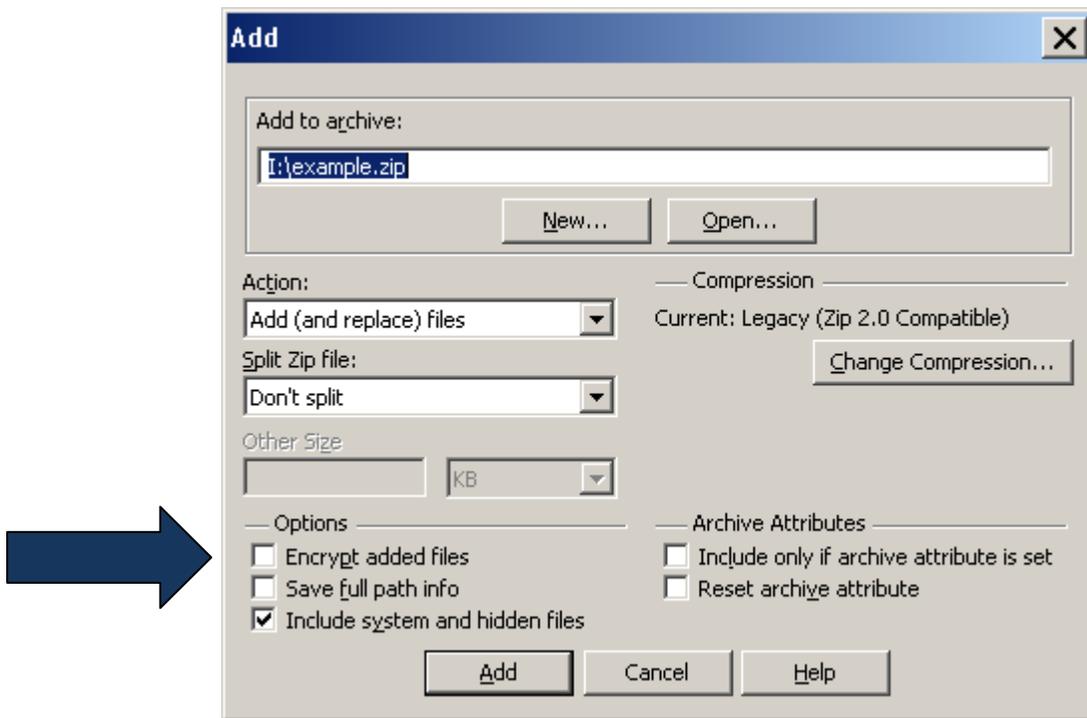
**After sending the zipped file as an attachment, CALL your recipient(s) on the phone and give them the password. The use of voicemail to convey the password is prohibited. Do Not Send the password in an email. Passwords used to encrypt the attached file must be complex and include upper and lower case characters and at least one number.**

### **Encryption Instructions:**

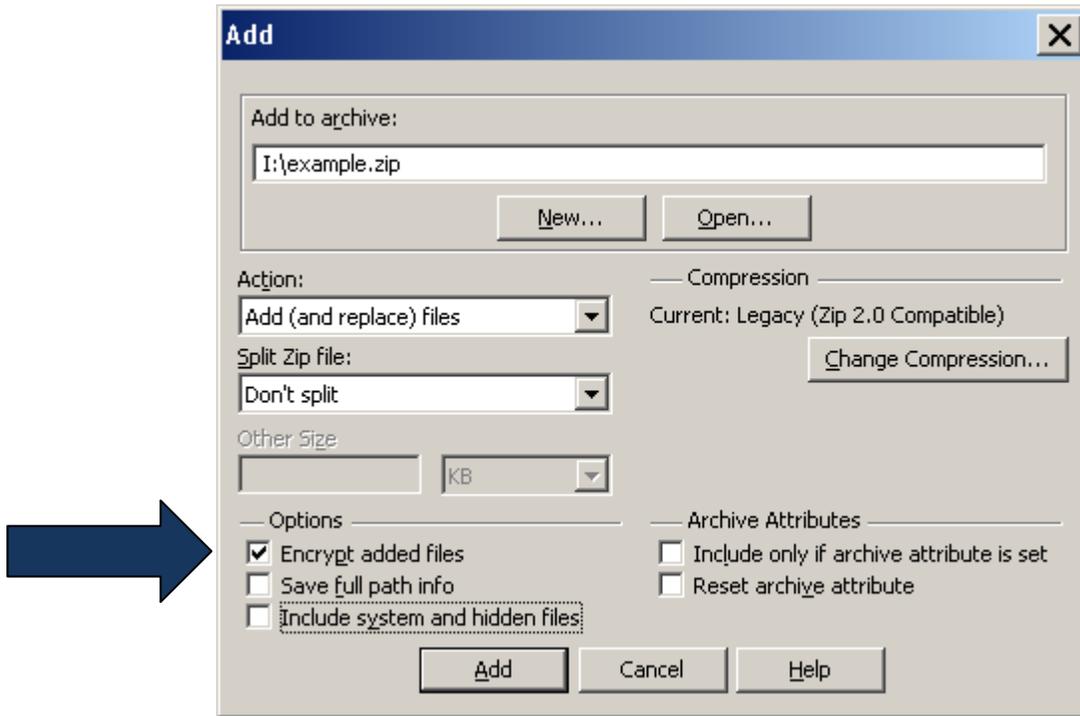
To encrypt files that contain PII data, right click on the filename in Windows Explorer, cursor down to "WinZip", then cursor over to "Add to Zip File..." (highlighted below).



The below screen will open. By default “Encrypt added files” is NOT checked

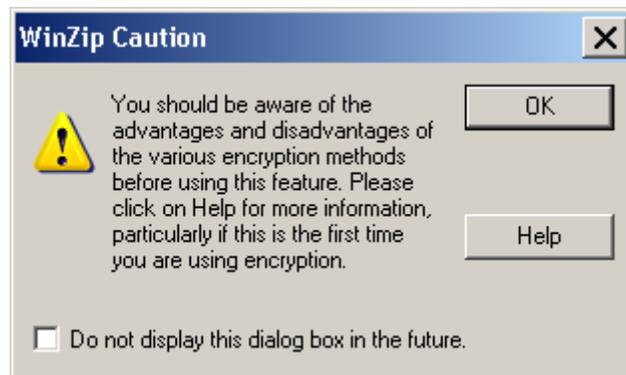


So...Be sure and click the box next to “Encrypt added files” as shown below. Uncheck “Include system and hidden files” unless you are compressing and encrypting an entire folder, rather than a single file.

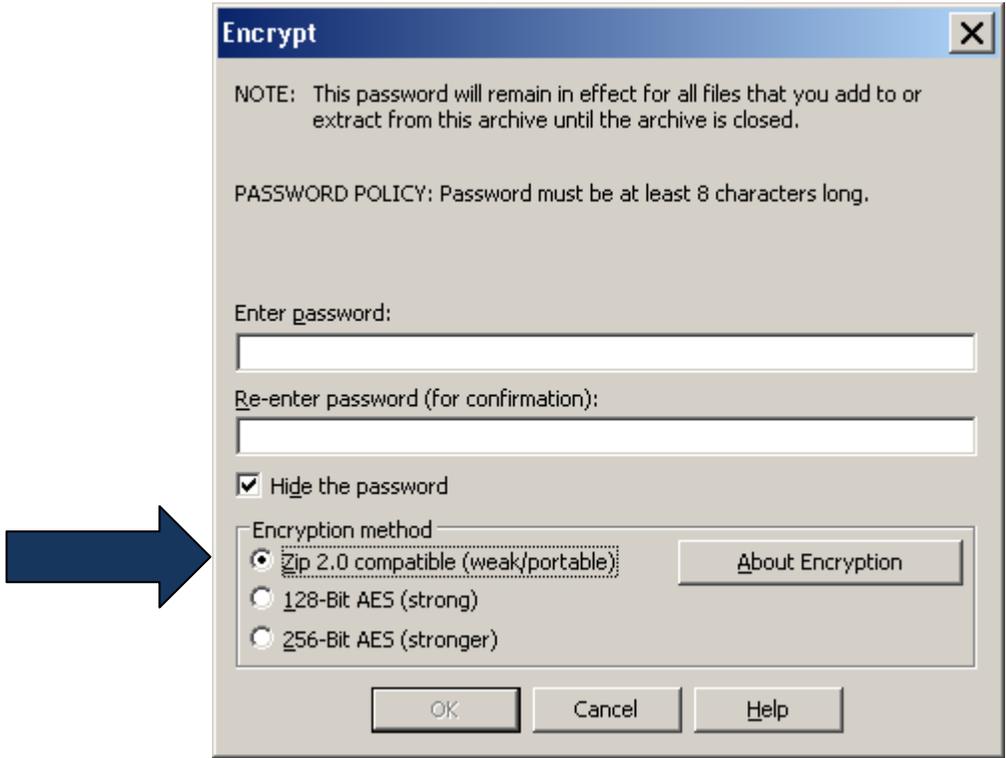


Then click the “Add” button...

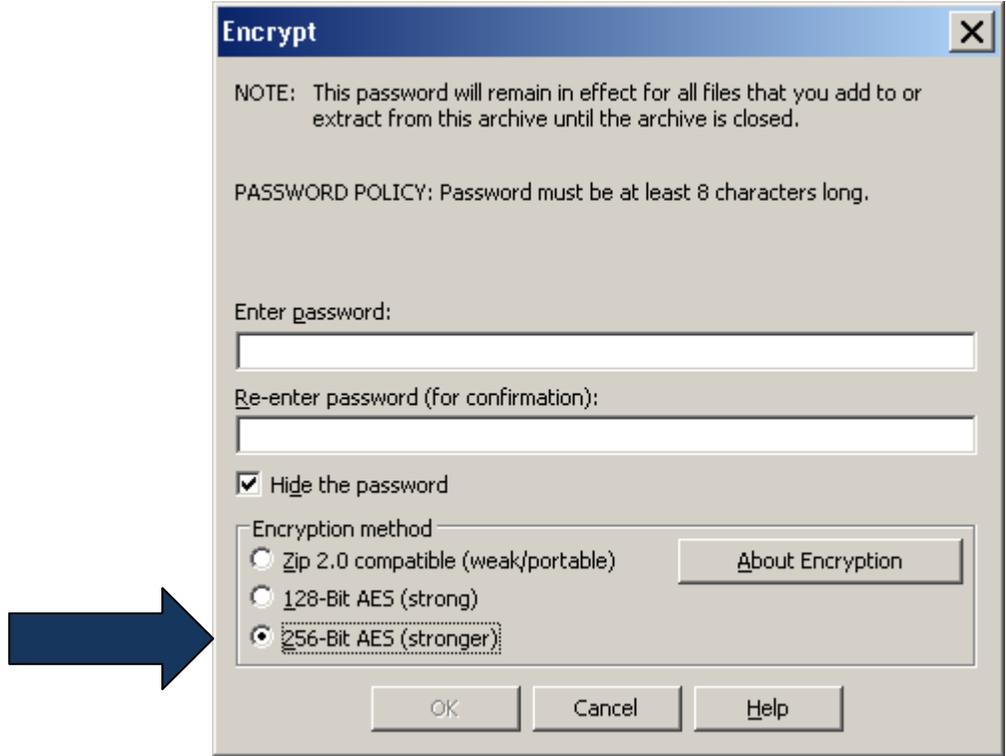
You will receive the below Warning regarding encryption. You can click on Help if you wish to read more about encryption, or just click OK



The below windows will pop up next. By default the simplest encryption method, Zip 2.0, is selected but that is NOT sufficient to encrypt PII data so...



Make certain to change the “Encryption method” to “256-Bit AES” by clicking the radio button, as shown below

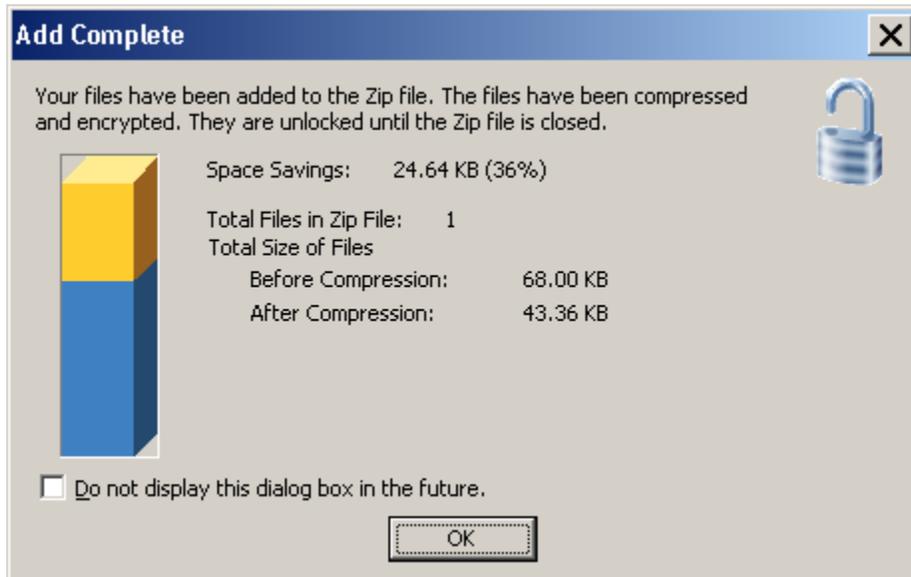


Then enter a **STRONG** password, which requires at least 12 characters, including at least one number, at least one symbol, at least one lower case letter and at least one upper case letter, according to NFC policy. You'll have to enter it twice, as shown below.

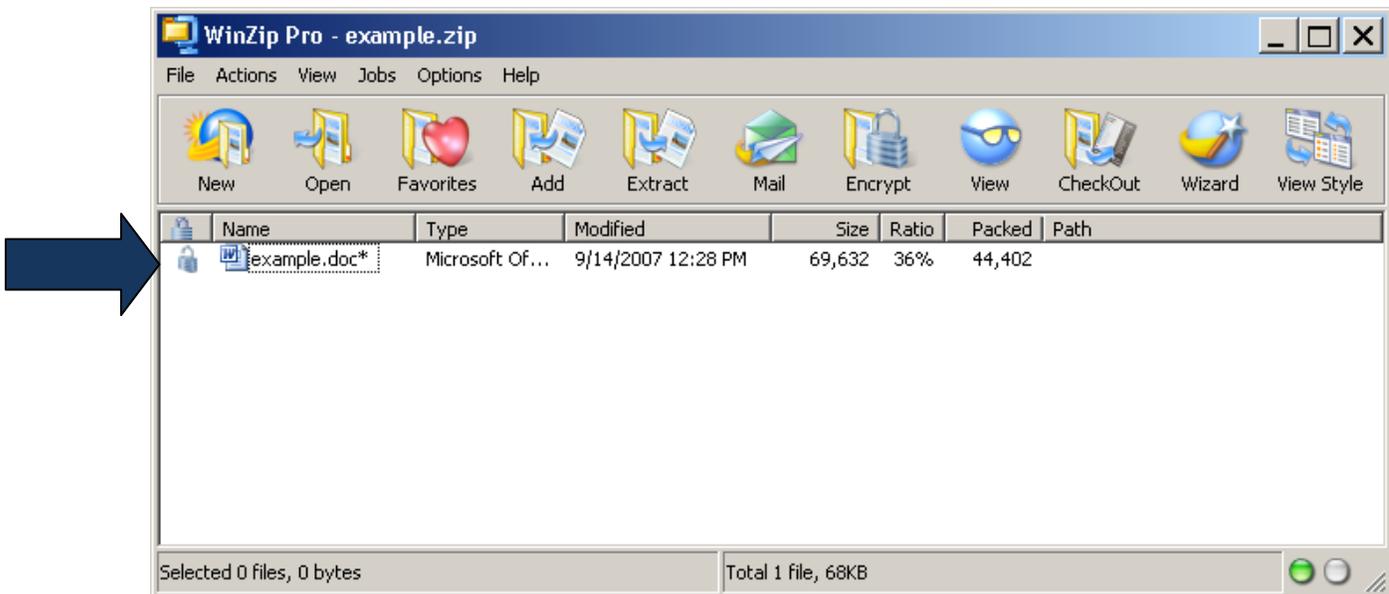


Then click OK

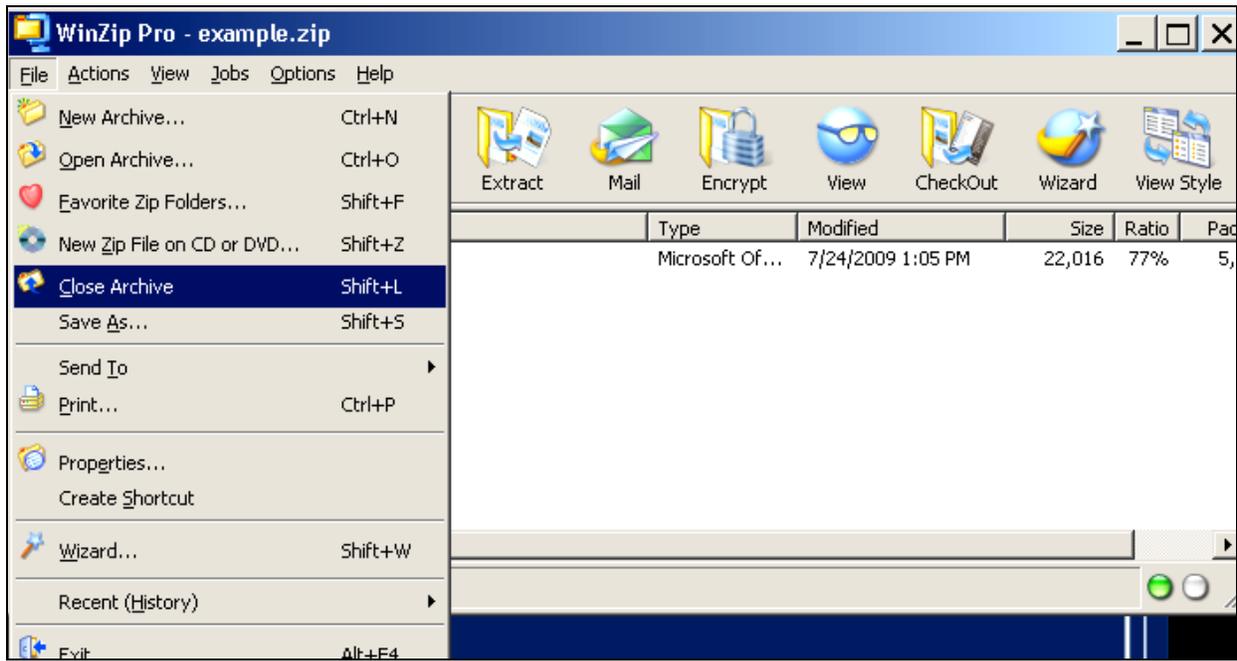
The next window indicates that your file has been compressed and encrypted. **If it doesn't state compressed AND ENCRYPTED, you were not successful and should go back and try again.** If it states "...compressed and encrypted..." click OK to continue. Note that it states below the file is unlocked until the Zip file is closed.



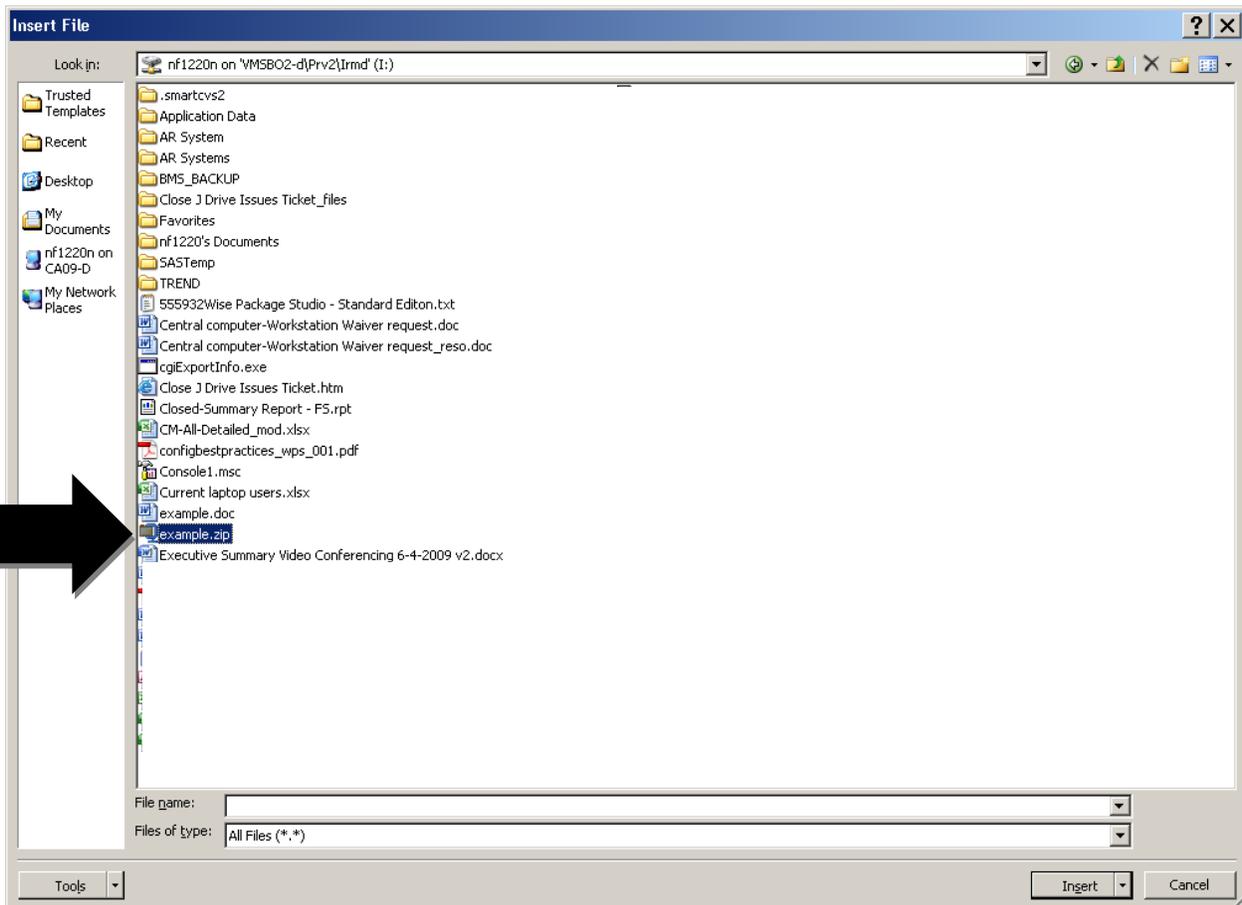
The next window below shows your file, or files, that are contained in the zip file. As an additional check to make certain your file was encrypted, look for the padlock icon on the left side, as shown below, which indicates the file is encrypted.



The final step is important. You must close the Zip file by clicking the File pulldown menu, and choosing “Close Archive” as shown below. Then you can close WinZip and e-mail your new Zip file as described below.



**Be careful to only e-mail the file with ZIP on the end, not the original file you had before encryption. See below for an example. Be certain you only attach the Zip file.**



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