



SecureZIP Standard Version 11

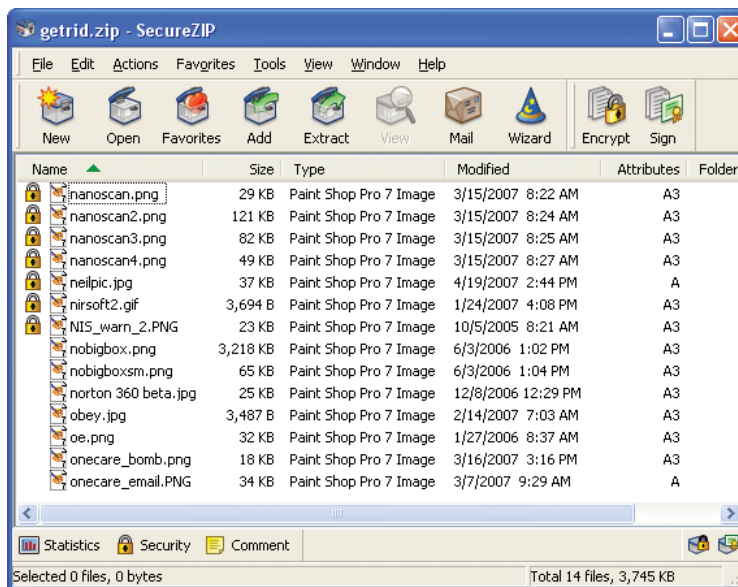
ZIP files are everywhere. The ZIP format (invented by Phil Katz, founder of PKWARE) collects related files into a single package and handily compresses the data for storage or transmission. Microsoft Windows has had limited ZIP support built in for years now, but real power and flexibility in ZIP file management requires a third-party utility. PKWARE's SecureZIP Standard Version 11 does everything you'd expect from a ZIP utility and more. For a limited time, you can get it at no cost.

Windows ME, XP, and Vista treat ZIP files as a special type of folder. You move files into and out of them just as you do any other folder. When you install SecureZIP, it automatically takes over handling of ZIP files and installs right-click menu options for common ZIP file operations. SecureZIP can also open a number of other popular compression formats, including CAB, GZIP, JAR, LZH, and RAR. To move files into or out of a ZIP archive, you can use SecureZIP's standard interface, run one of its wizards, or just drag and drop.

So far that's hardly different from what you can do in Windows (though Vista won't encrypt files), but SecureZIP can optionally use a stronger encryption algorithm than Windows can. When you choose strong encryption, you also have the option to encrypt files using public-key cryptography instead of a simple password. You specify a list of recipients whose public keys you have obtained, and each recipient can decrypt the file using the corresponding private key. The same technology can be used to sign a ZIP archive digitally, guaranteeing that it hasn't been changed since you signed it. And SecureZIP can optionally shred the original files after storing them in encrypted form.

Sometimes just the names of the files in a ZIP archive might give away secrets, even if the files themselves are encrypted. SecureZIP can optionally encrypt the filenames as well so that anyone seeking even to see the list of filenames must supply the ZIP file password (or private key). Those using other ZIP utilities may not be able to open files that use these advanced features—they'll need the free ZIP Reader from PKWARE.

In my testing, it seemed that the filename encryption feature worked only for ZIP files that were encrypted at creation. When I tried to encrypt the



contents of an existing ZIP file, the app didn't encrypt the filenames. After some serious back-and-forth with experts at PKWARE, we figured out what I was doing wrong. The option to encrypt filenames is active only when SecureZIP is configured to encrypt new ZIP files always. It's a little nonintuitive, but no problem once you know what to do.

SecureZIP has the handy ability to split an overly large archive into segments. If you save the file to a floppy disk drive (for those of you still using floppy disks), the app will automatically call for new disks as needed and optionally format them. SecureZIP doesn't do that with CD-Rs, but you can choose a specific segment size and then use a third-party burning app to get the segments onto discs. The app can also turn a ZIP archive into a self-extracting executable. This last feature does more than just allow unzipping for users who lack a ZIP utility. The resulting executable can create Start menu items, register file associations, and run a specified program after the files are unzipped—enough to serve as an installer for a simple utility program. To get that functionality in a WinZip self-extracting archive, you have to buy an add-on utility.



SecureZIP

Bottomline: PKWARE originated the ZIP format, and SecureZIP 11 does everything you'd expect in a ZIP utility. It also integrates with Outlook to speed and secure your e-mail, and it brings public-key cryptography into everyone's reach. Get your copy while it's free.

Pros: Offers strong encryption with optional public-key cryptography. Integrates with Microsoft Outlook to zip, encrypt, and digitally sign attachments and/or message bodies. Can create self-extracting program installers.

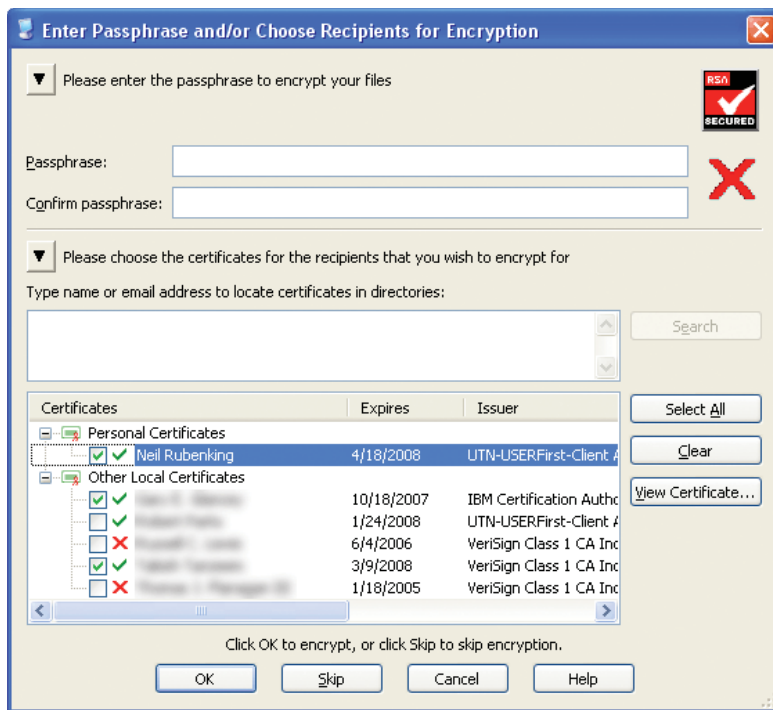
Cons: No file preview in main interface. Command-line operation requires extra-cost add-on.



AUTOMATED E-MAIL SECURITY

SecureZIP integrates with Microsoft Outlook 2000 or later versions to help speed and secure your e-mail correspondence. The app can automatically zip all attachments, so they take less space to store and less time to transmit. You can set it to Zip only attachments larger than a specified size, and to ignore GIFs, JPGs, and other file types that are already compressed. For added security, set it to encrypt the zipped attachments and even encrypt the message body. If the recipient is also a SecureZIP user, decompression and decryption of the message body is automatic. For others, an optional short message describes how to access the message and attachments—the decrypted message body will open in Outlook Express or whatever program they have associated with EML files. You can set SecureZIP to sign the attachments digitally, for a guarantee that no one has tampered with them.

SecureZIP's public-key mail protection isn't quite as full-featured as that of the more expensive PGP Desktop Pro. PGP Desktop supplies you with a public/private key pair and automatically checks each outgoing e-mail to see if a public key is available for the recipient. And PGP maintains its own online key repository. PKWARE doesn't maintain a repository, but SecureZIP can automatically check and use each recipient's public key if you already have a local copy. To start using your own public key you can get a free personal digital certificate from Comodo, a global Certification Authority and publisher of the free Comodo Firewall. Just go to www.comodo.com and click the "Free Email Security Certificate" link—since an ActiveX control is involved you'll have to use Internet Explorer. Once you have your certificate, you can export a public key to share with your correspondents.



SecureZIP handles all standard ZIP management tasks and raises the security bar by allowing use of public-key cryptography. It integrates with Outlook to zip and encrypt e-mail attachments and even e-mail messages automatically. PKWARE has cut the price from \$99.95 to \$29.95 (the same as WinZip's standard edition), but for a limited time, you can get SecureZIP without paying a penny. Todd McLees, marketing VP for PKWARE, explained that the company wants to "make SecureZIP available to millions of users for free." An end date for this offer hasn't been set. "We want millions of users to download it before that conversation even occurs," McLees says. Still, I'd suggest you get your free copy right away. —Neil J. Rubenking

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