Creating a Back-up (or export) copy of your personal certificate(s) from Microsoft Internet Explorer

Your Medium Assurance Certificate exists only as an installed certificate on your computer unless (and until) you create a certificate back-up (or certificate export) file. You should keep this certificate back-up (export) file on external media (a CD or thumb drive, for example). You should keep the number of copies of your certificate back-up (export) files to a minimum to preclude the theft of your certificate (also called Private Key Compromise).

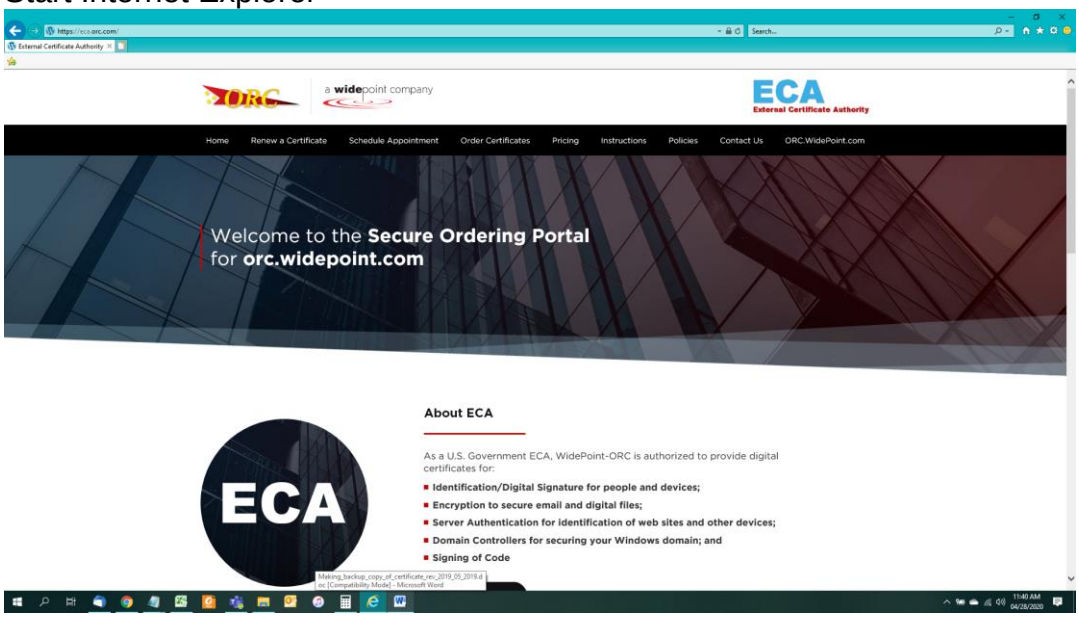
NOTE: These instructions are for exporting personal Medium Assurance Certificates (often referred to as "browser-based certificates" or "software (soft) certificates)

These instructions are not meant for "hardware-based certificates." Hardware based certificates are created on a smart card, or cryptographic token, or other cryptographic device. You cannot create a back-up copy of such a certificate because the private key cannot be copied off of the device. (But there should be no need to do so, since the certificate private key resides on the device and not on your computer's hard drive.) Medium-Token Assurance and Medium-Hardware Assurance certificates are "hardware-based certificates."

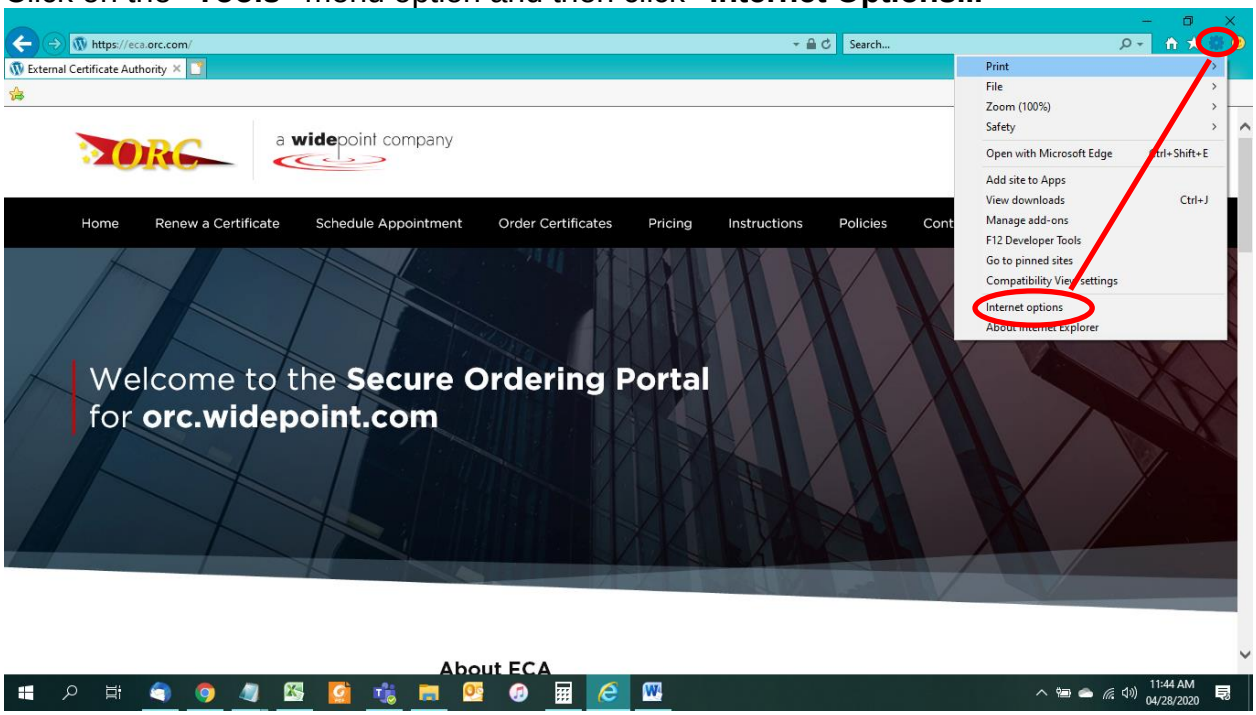
Since you have obtained both an Identity and an Encryption certificate, you will need to make a back-up (export) file for each certificate. (2 certificates means 2 back-up files) The only way to tell the back-up files apart is by the name that you assign to the file. The naming convention in the instructions below will assist you in keeping your files organized.

These instructions and associated screen captures were created with Internet Explorer 11 running on a Windows 10 operating system. Variations in versions of Internet Explorer and the Windows Operating system will result in some variation of alert boxes and screen images. For the most part, the process and individual steps are the same across Windows platforms. (You might see a dialog box prompting you to 'allow' access on a Windows Windows 7 computer; just click the buttons that seem to move the process forward.)

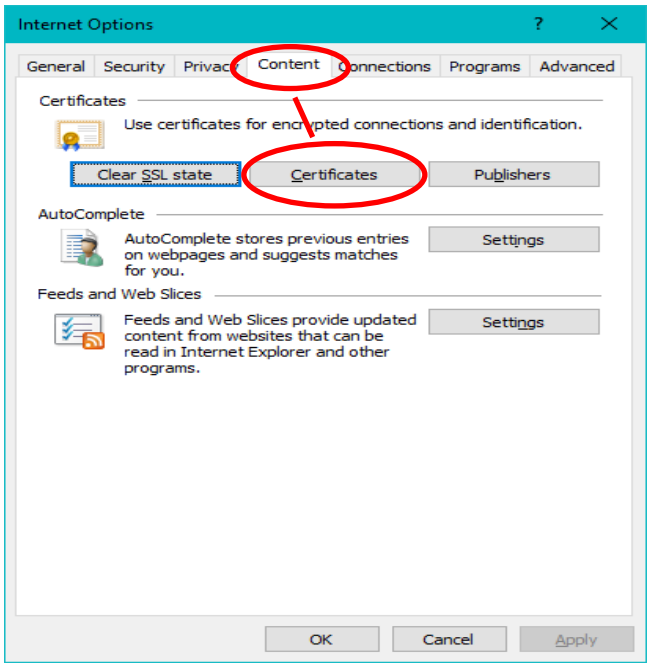
1. Start Internet Explorer



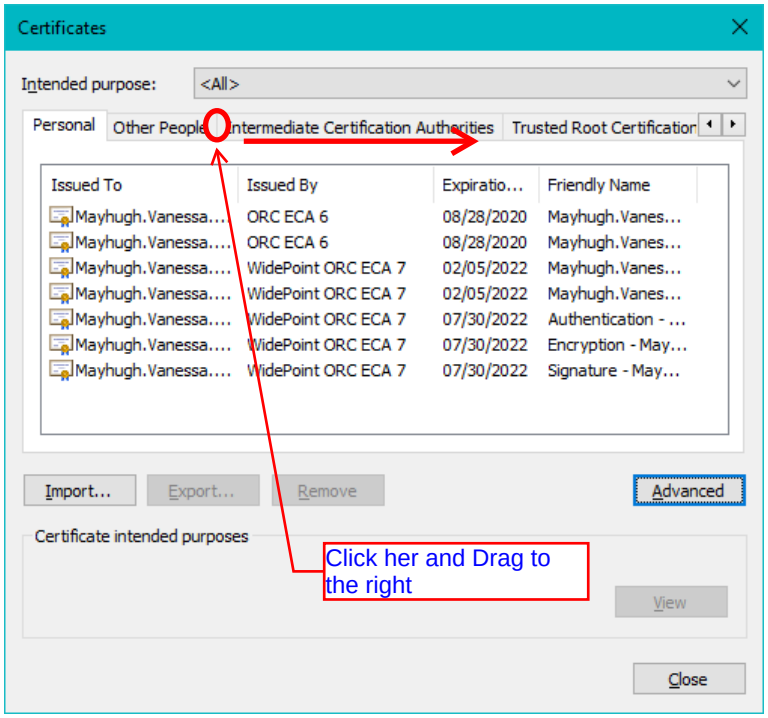
2. Click on the **"Tools"** menu option and then click **"Internet Options..."**



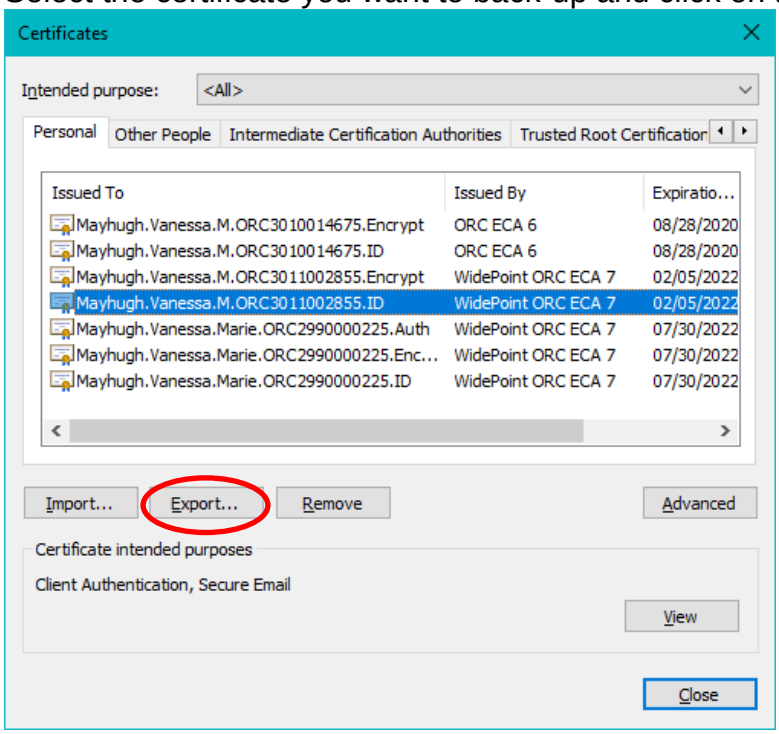
3. Select the **Content** tab, then click the **Certificates...** button.



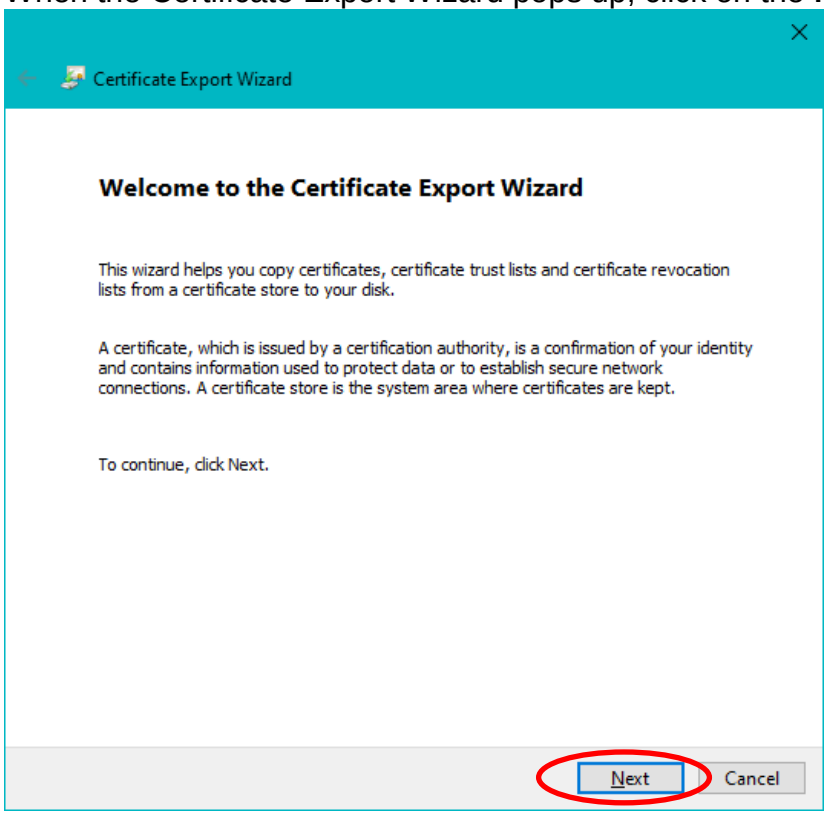
4. On the Certificates dialog box, widen the **Issued To** column to read the entire certificate name.



5. Select the certificate you want to back-up and click on the **Export** button.

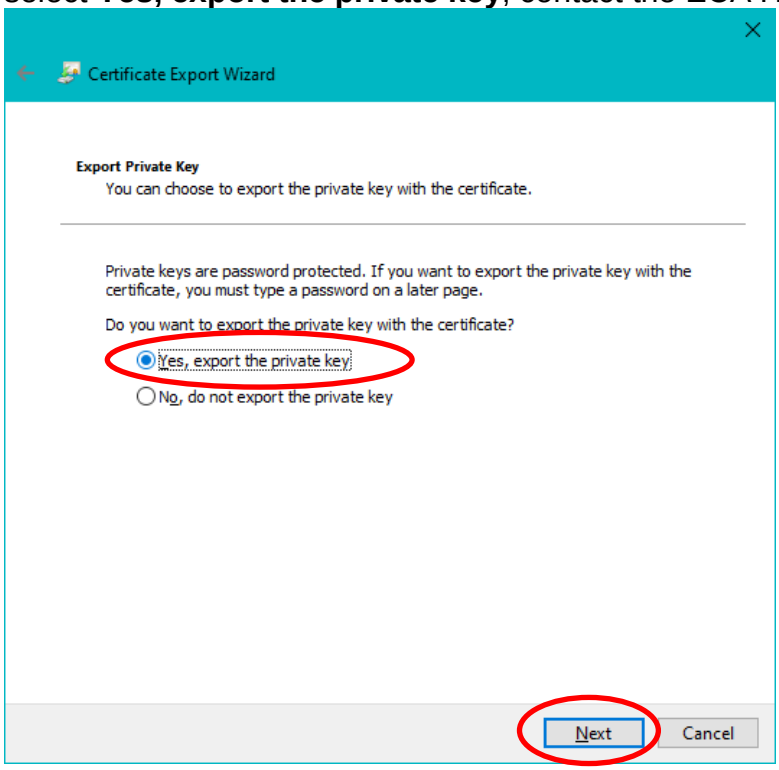


6. When the Certificate Export Wizard pops up, click on the **Next >** button.

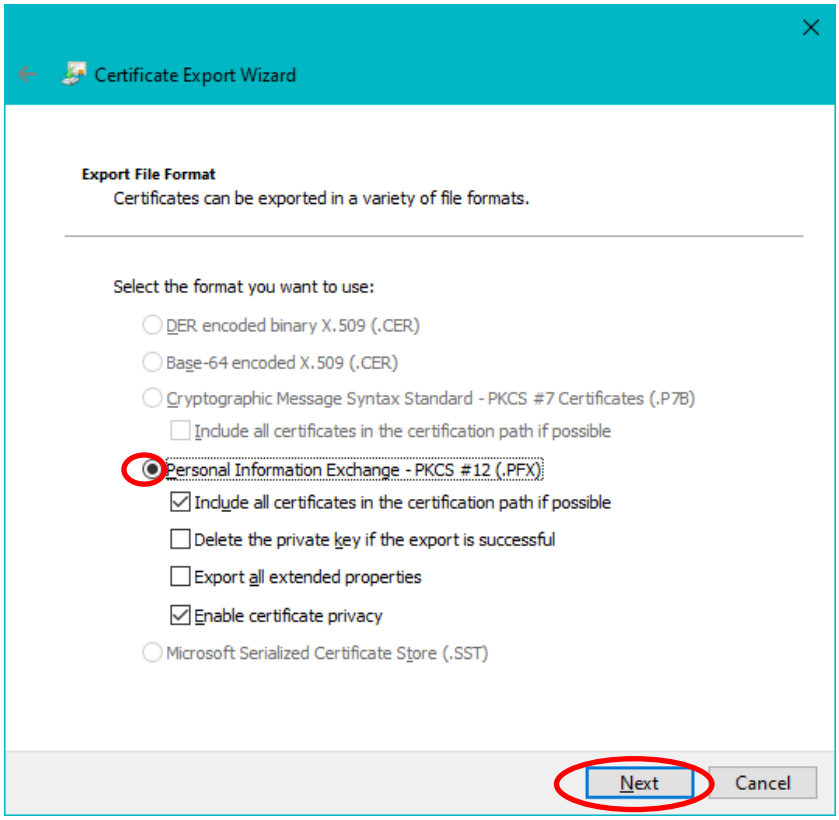


7. Select **Yes, export the private key** and click the **Next >** button.

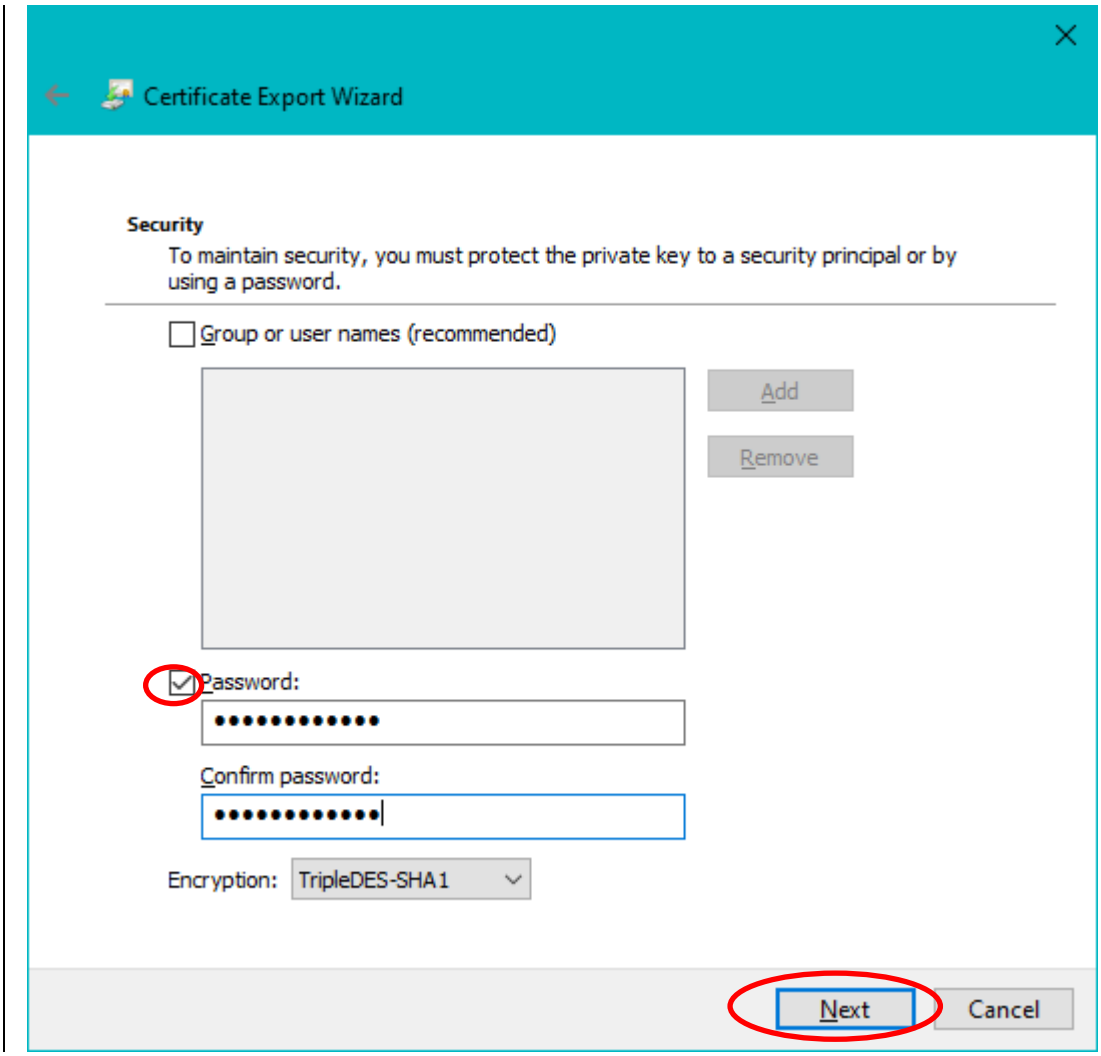
   CAUTION: it is possible to make 'copy' of your certificate that does not include the certificate Private Key, but it will NOT be a BACKUP copy. If you cannot select **Yes, export the private key**, contact the ECA Help Desk.



8. Make sure the **Personal Information Exchange** selector is selected and click the **Next >** button.

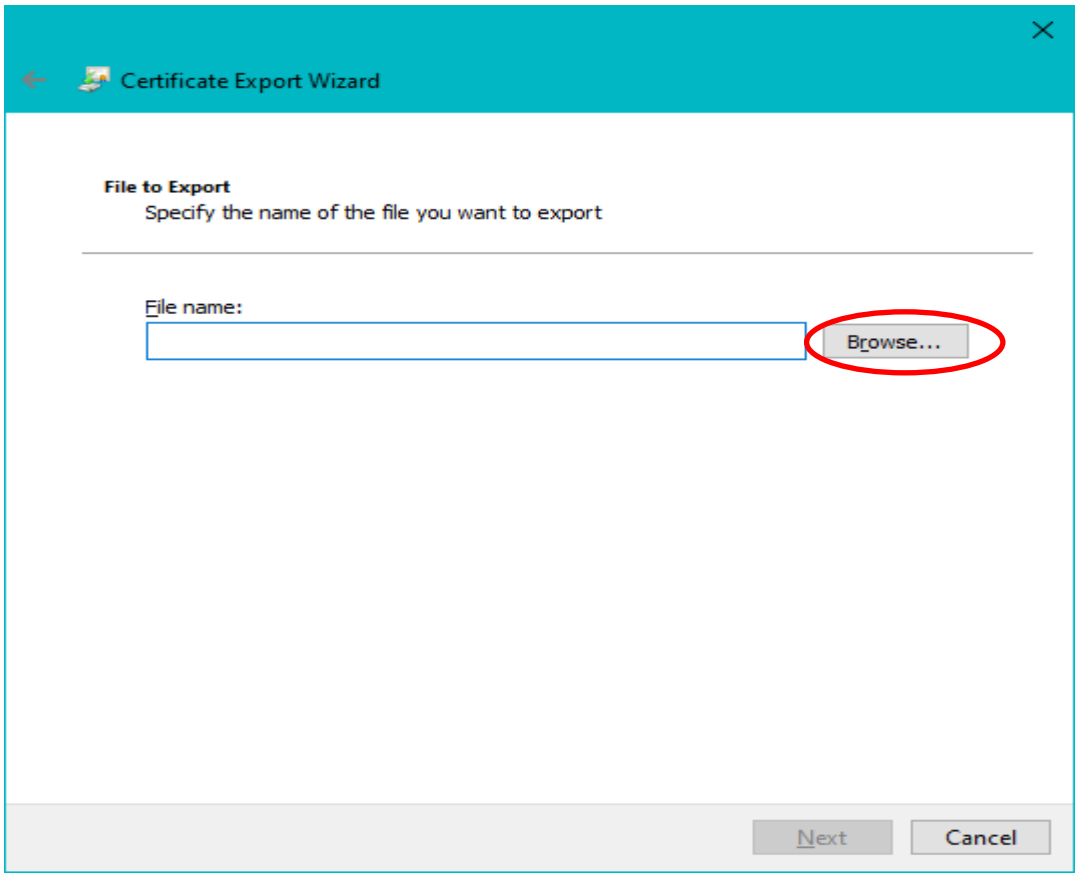


9. Select the Password option on the Security page and assign (and confirm) a password to protect the certificate backup file that you are about to create. Click the **Next >** button. **IMPORTANT:** You will need to know this password in order to use the back-up file in the future.

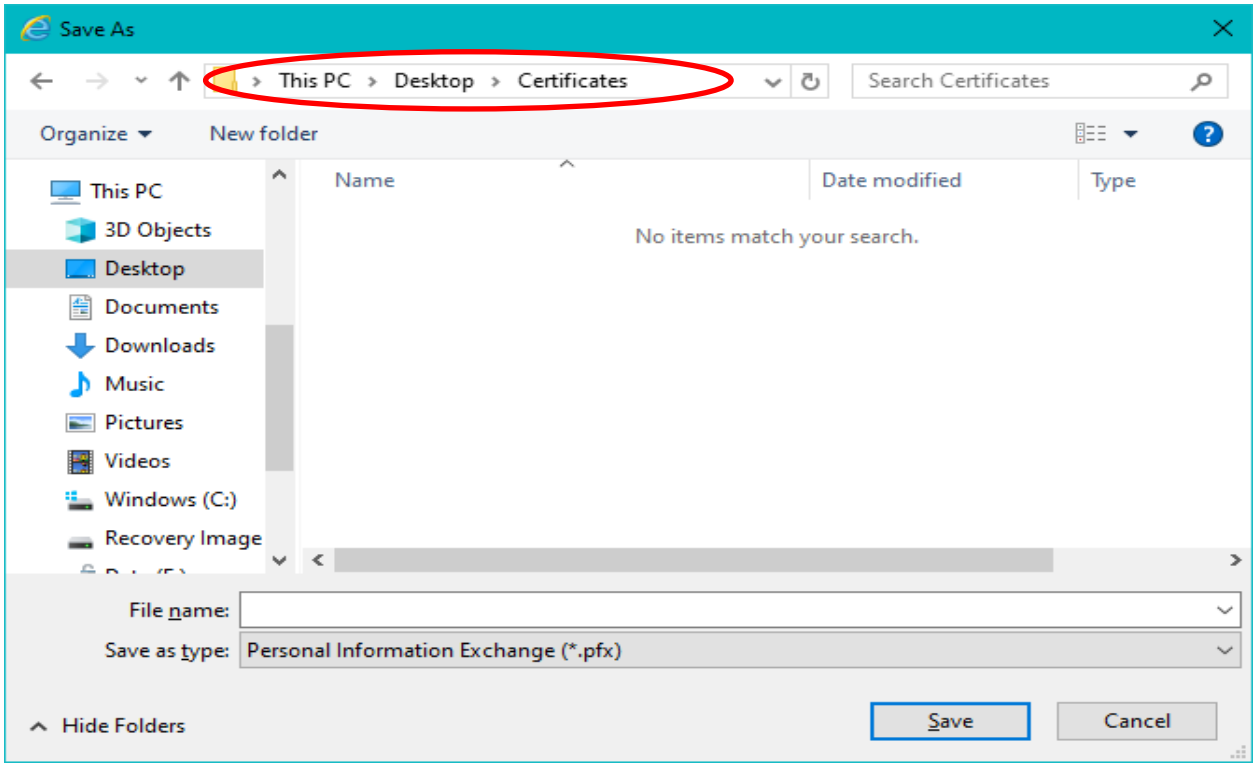


NOTE: The DoD requires that you protect your certificate with a password, so that no one, but you, may ever use it. Protecting the file by giving only Users or Groups permissions to the file may prevent you from employing the back-up from outside of your domain. WidePoint does not recommend selecting this option.

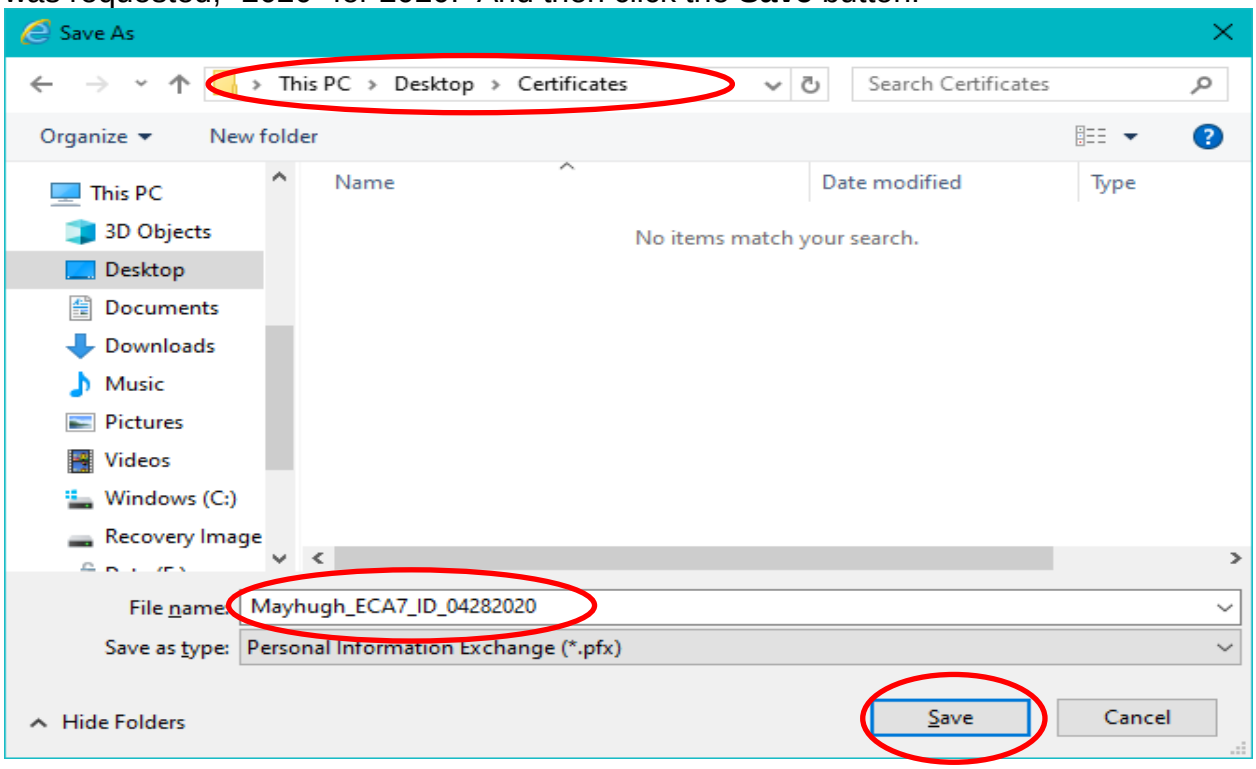
10. Click the **Browse...** button.



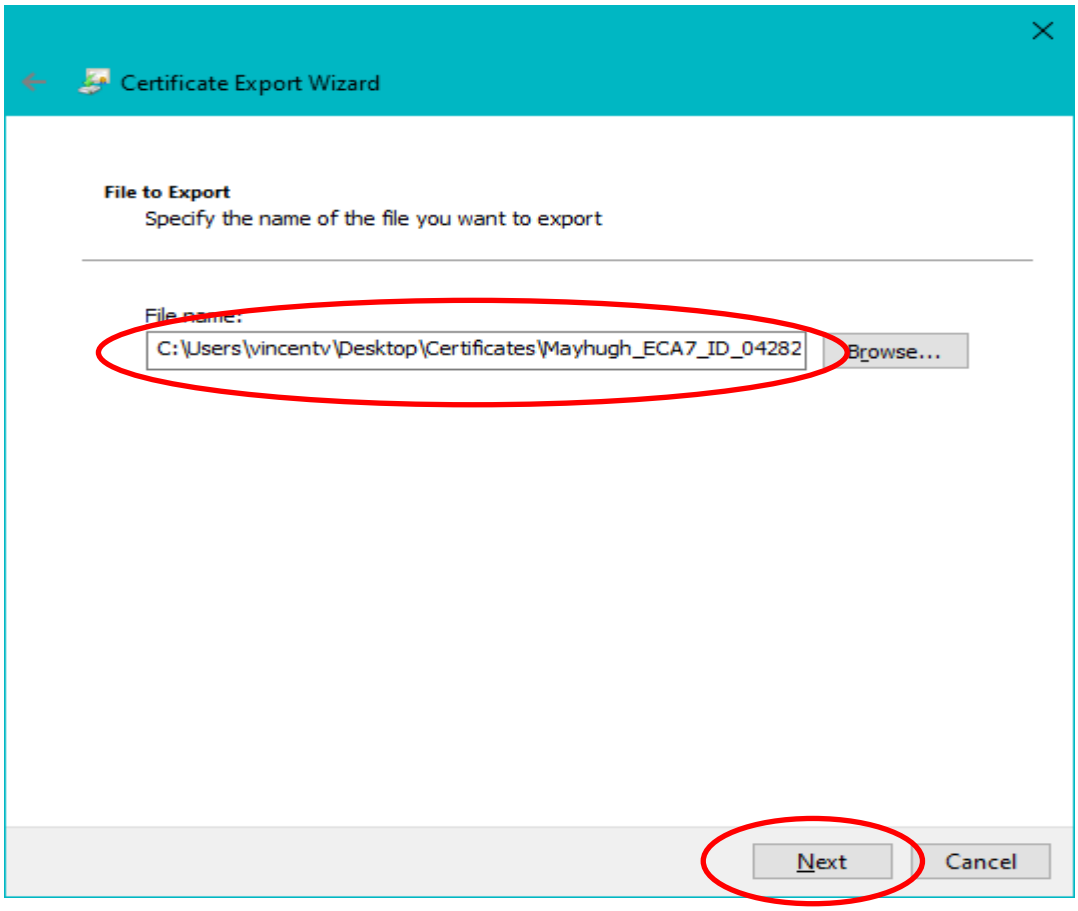
11. In the Save As dialog box navigate to the location where you want to save the certificate back-up file. Note: You may save it to a temporary location on your computer, as long you move the file later. Otherwise, if your hard drive crashes you will lose your installed certificates and your certificate back-up files.



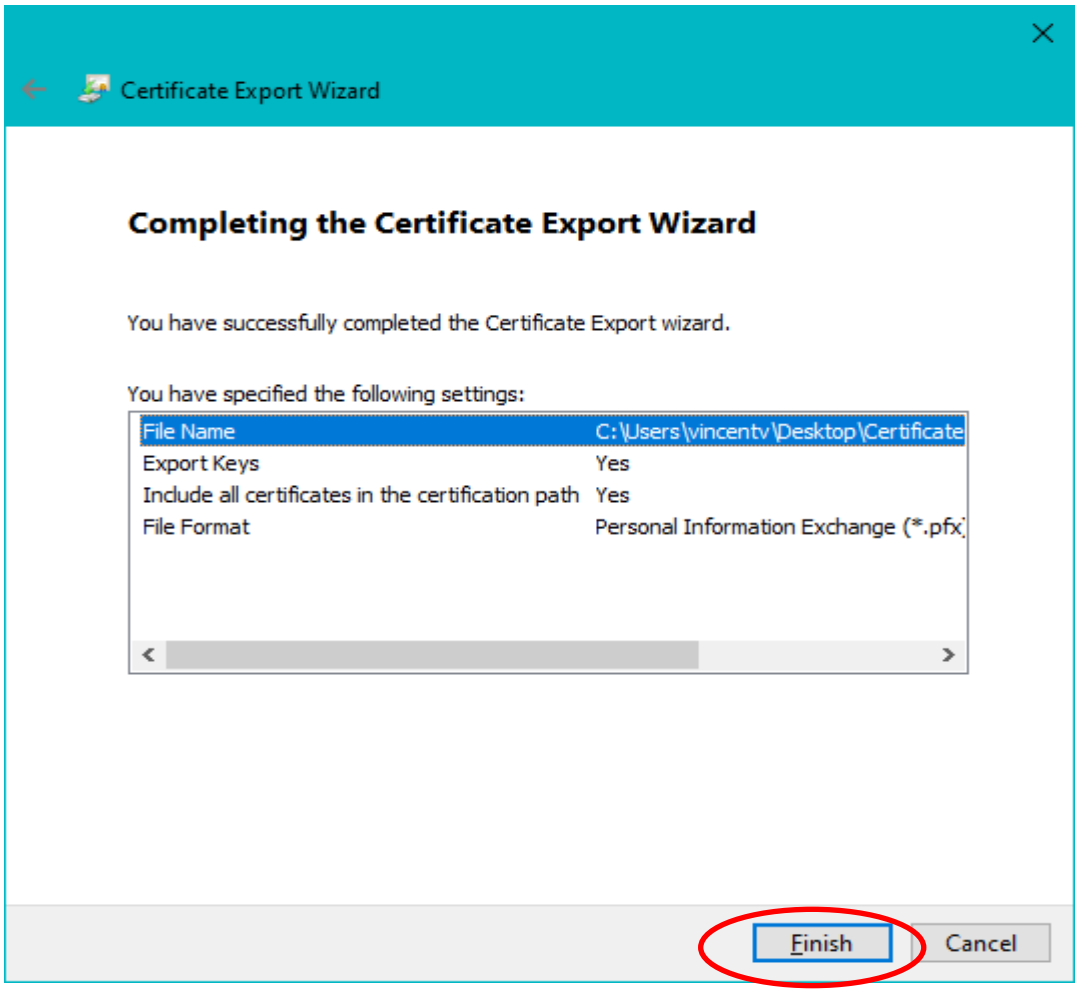
12. Enter a file name. We recommend that you make the filename "Yourlastname_ECA7_ID_MonthDayYear" use ID for your IDentity certificate and EN for you ENcryption certificate. YYYY should be the year that the certificate was requested; "2020" for 2020. And then click the **Save** button.



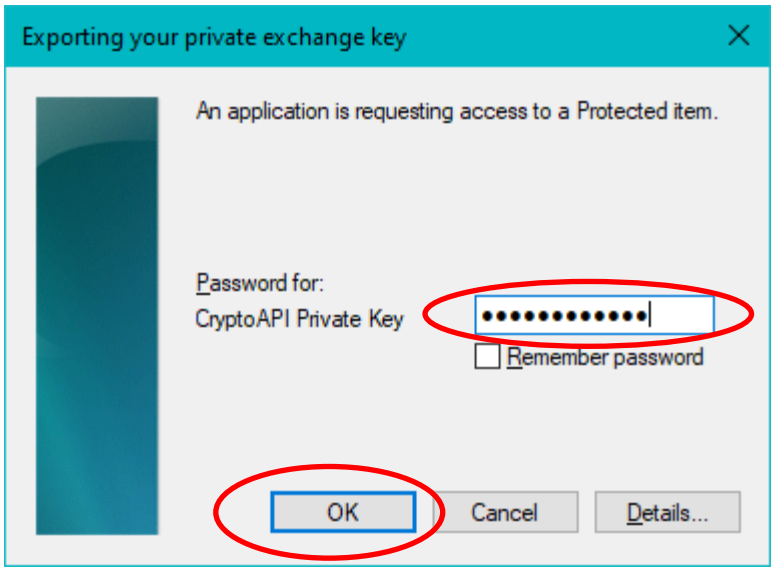
13. Back on the File to Export dialog, confirm that the path and file name are correct and then click the **Next** button.



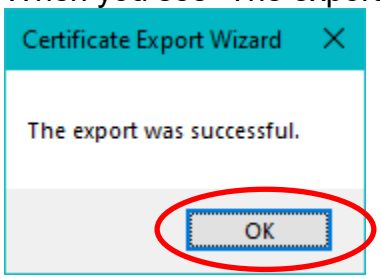
14. Click the **Finish** button.



15. In the Exporting your private exchange key dialog, enter the password that you previously assigned to protect your certificate private key and Click the **OK** button. NOTE: If there is no text box for you to enter a password, it means that no password was assigned to protect the certificate private key when you requested (or last installed) your certificate. Just click the **OK** button. Then see the instruction “Assigning a password to your certificate in Internet Explorer.”

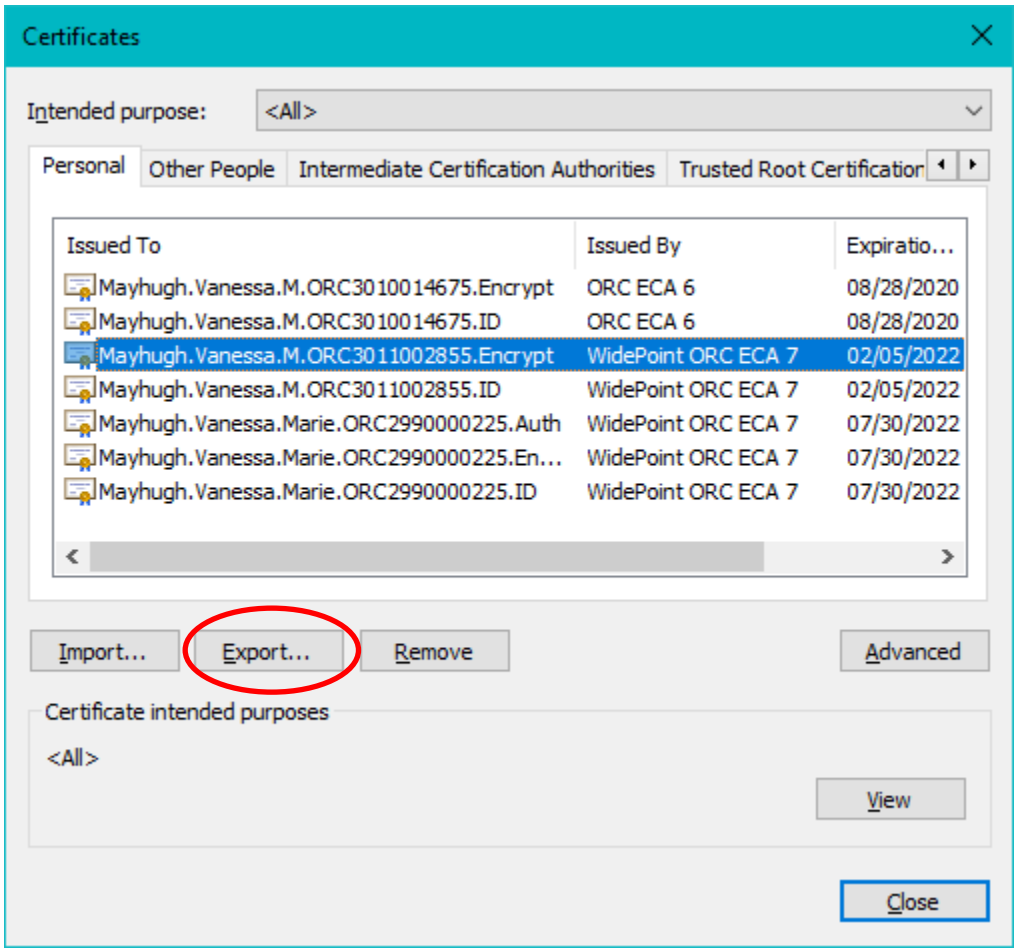


16. When you see “The export was successful”; click the **OK** button.

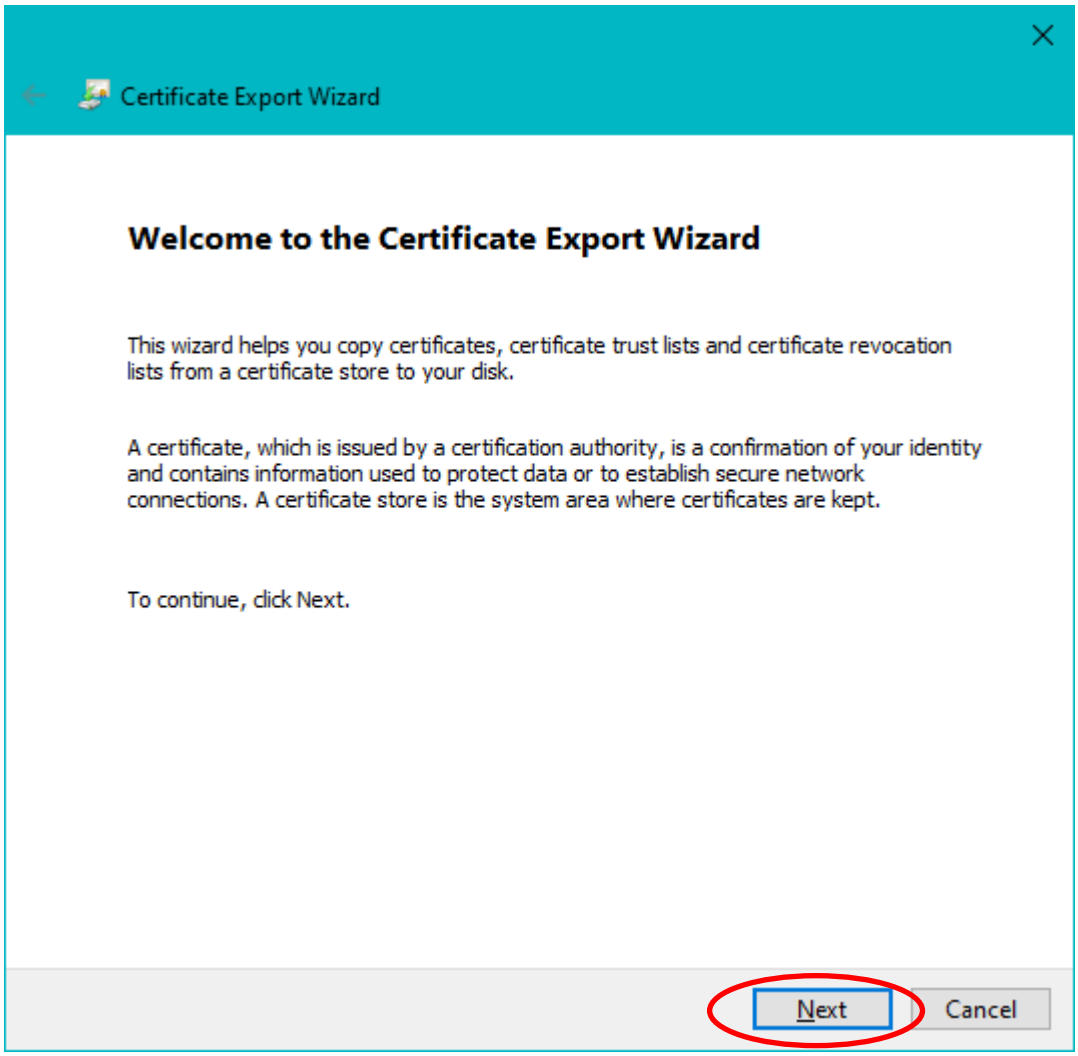


If you do not have an Encryption Certificate, you are done. If you do have an Encryption Certificate, select it and click the **Export** button

> *[Note: Most people should have an Encryption certificate. If you do **not** see it, then it is not currently istalled. If your certificates were issued recently, please install your Encryption certificate (and back it up) even if you do not think you will use it.]*



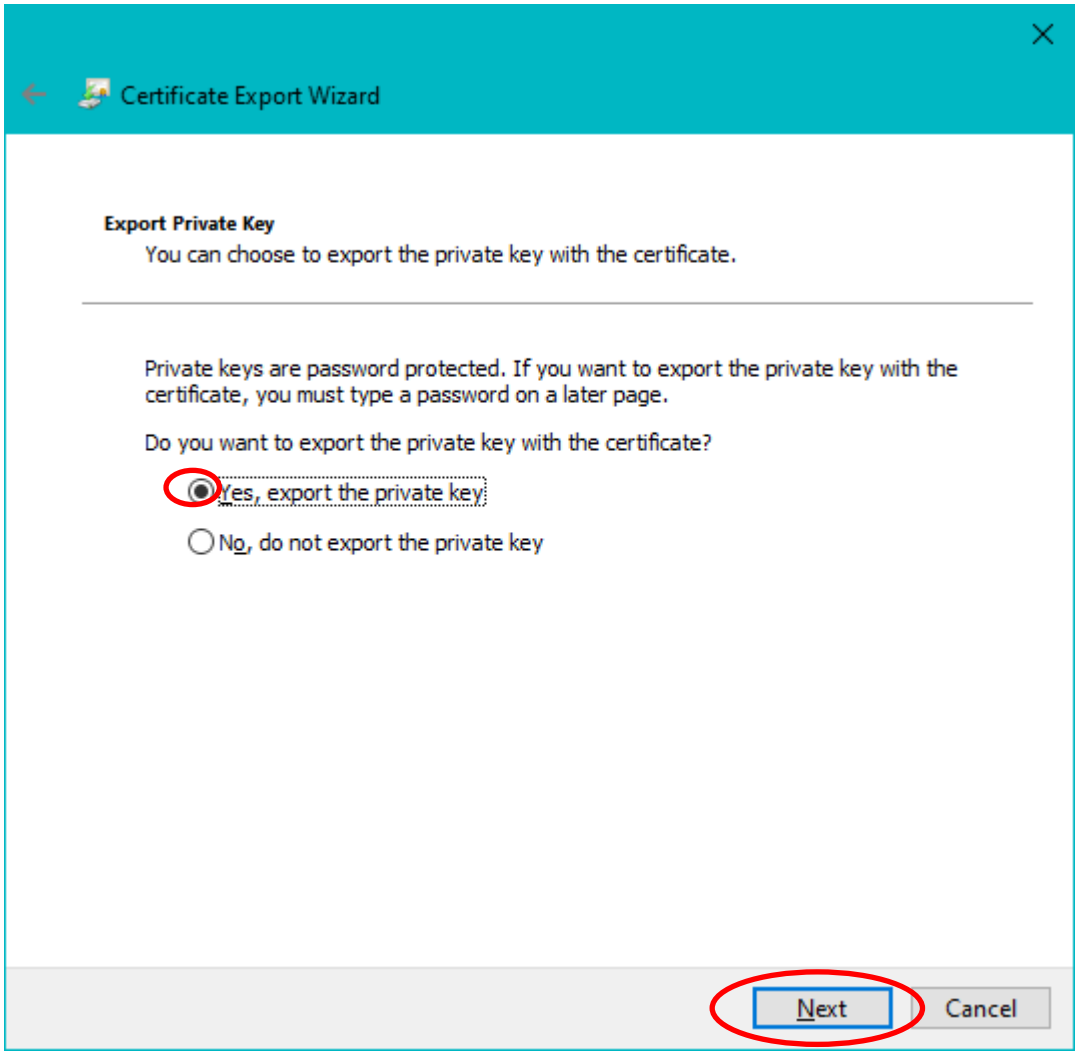
17. When the Certificate Export Wizard pops up, click on the **Next >** button.



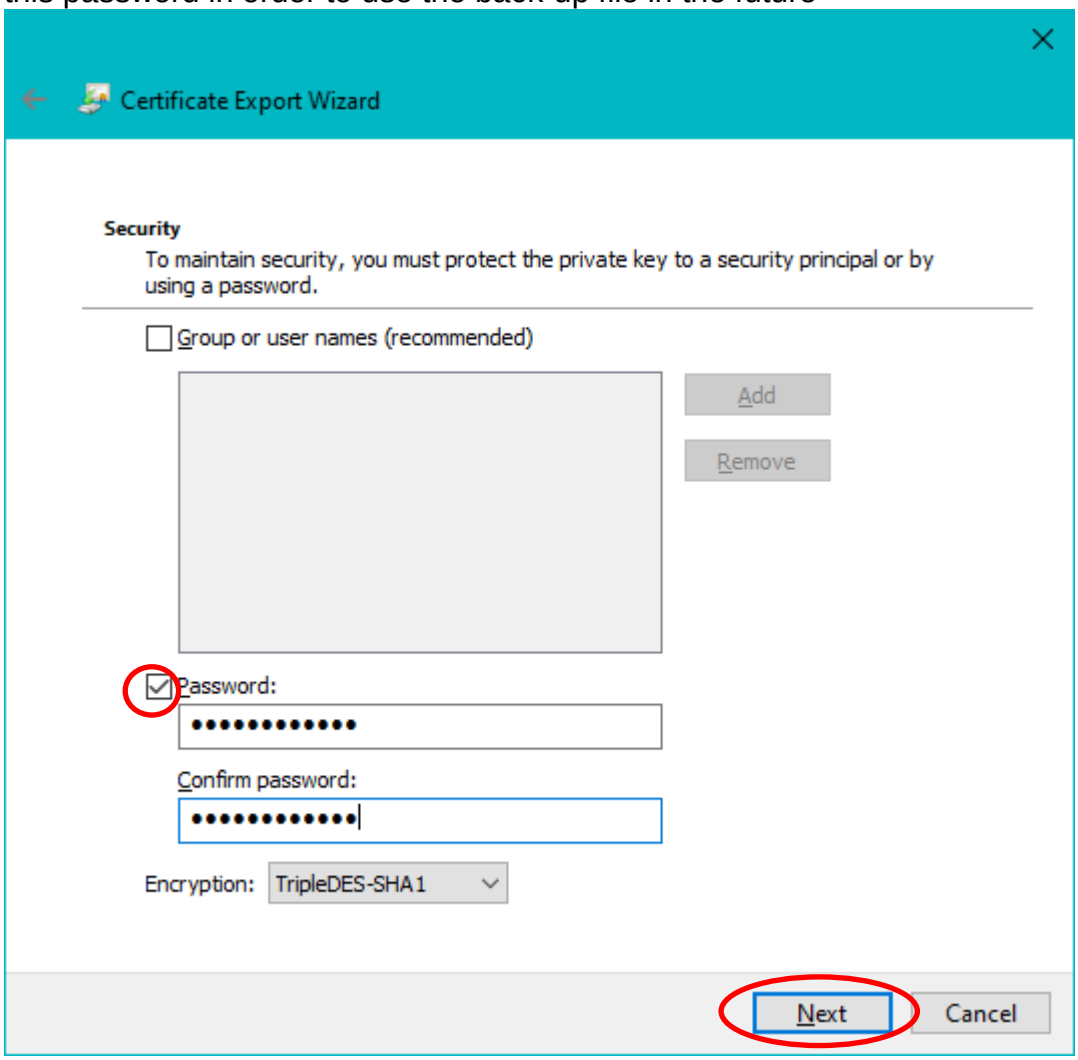
18. Select **Yes, export the private key** and click the **Next >** button.

    CAUTION: it is possible to make 'copy' of your certificate that does not include the certificate Private Key, but it will NOT be a BACKUP copy. If you cannot select **Yes, export the private key**, contact the ECA Help Desk.

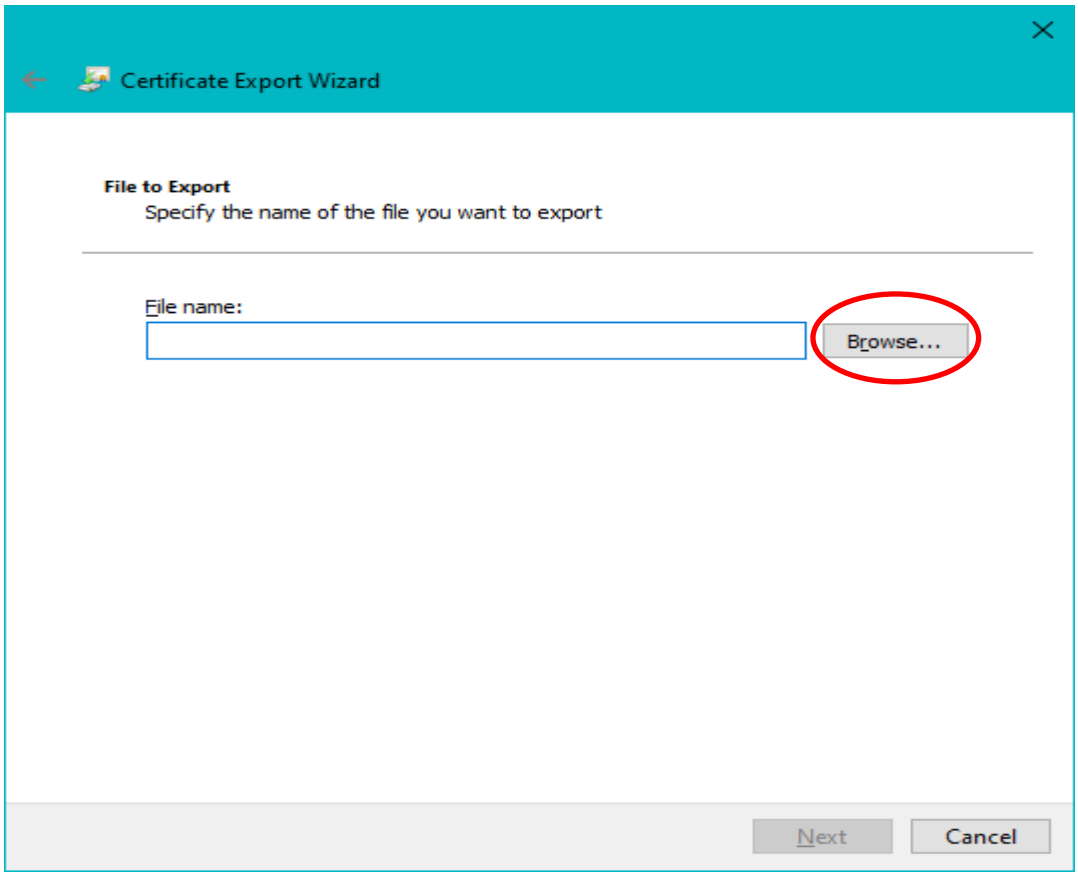
19. Make sure the **Personal Information Exchange** selector is selected and click the **Next >** button.



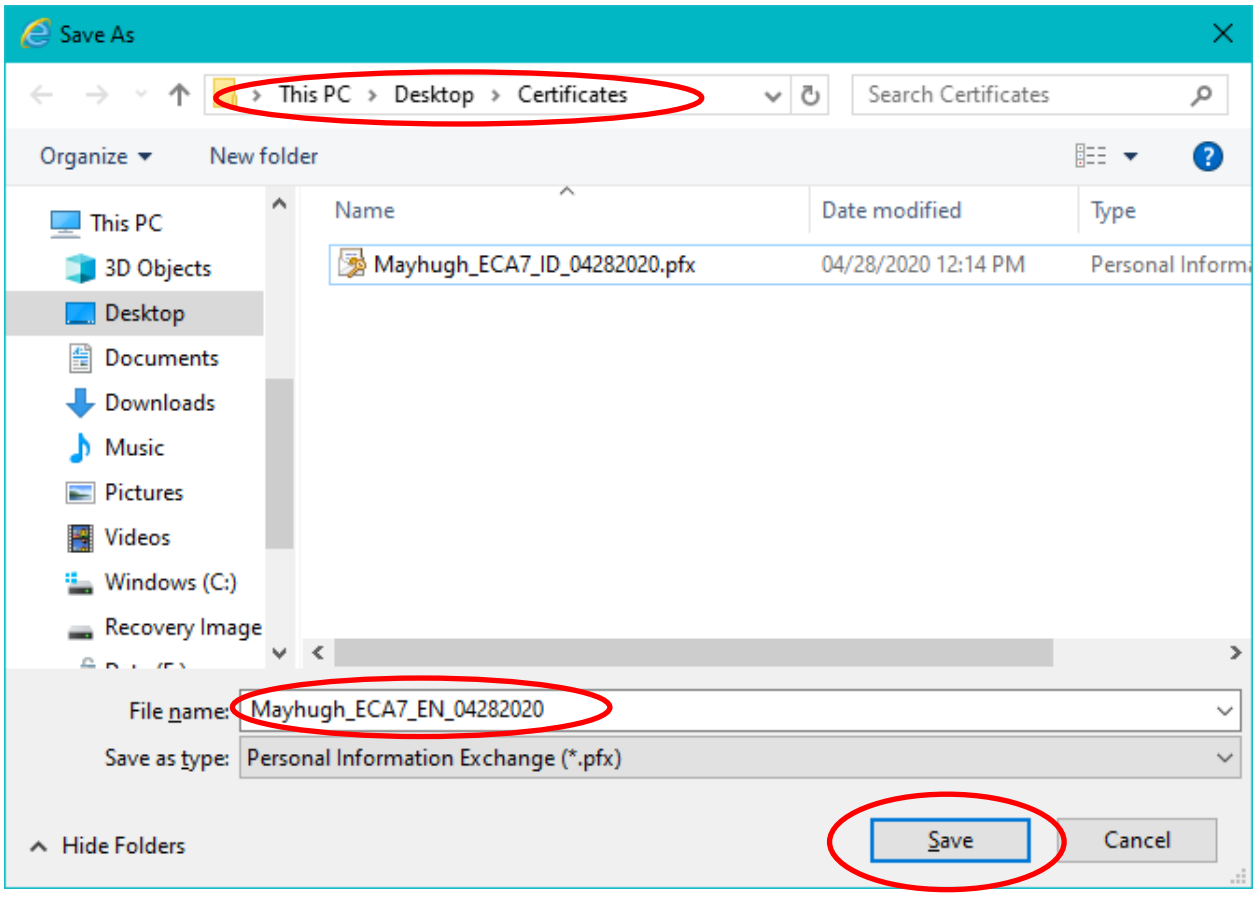
20. Assign (and confirm) a password to protect the certificate backup file that you are about to create. [We recommend that you use the same password that you used in Step 9, above.] Click the **Next >** button. **IMPORTANT:** You will need to know this password in order to use the back-up file in the future



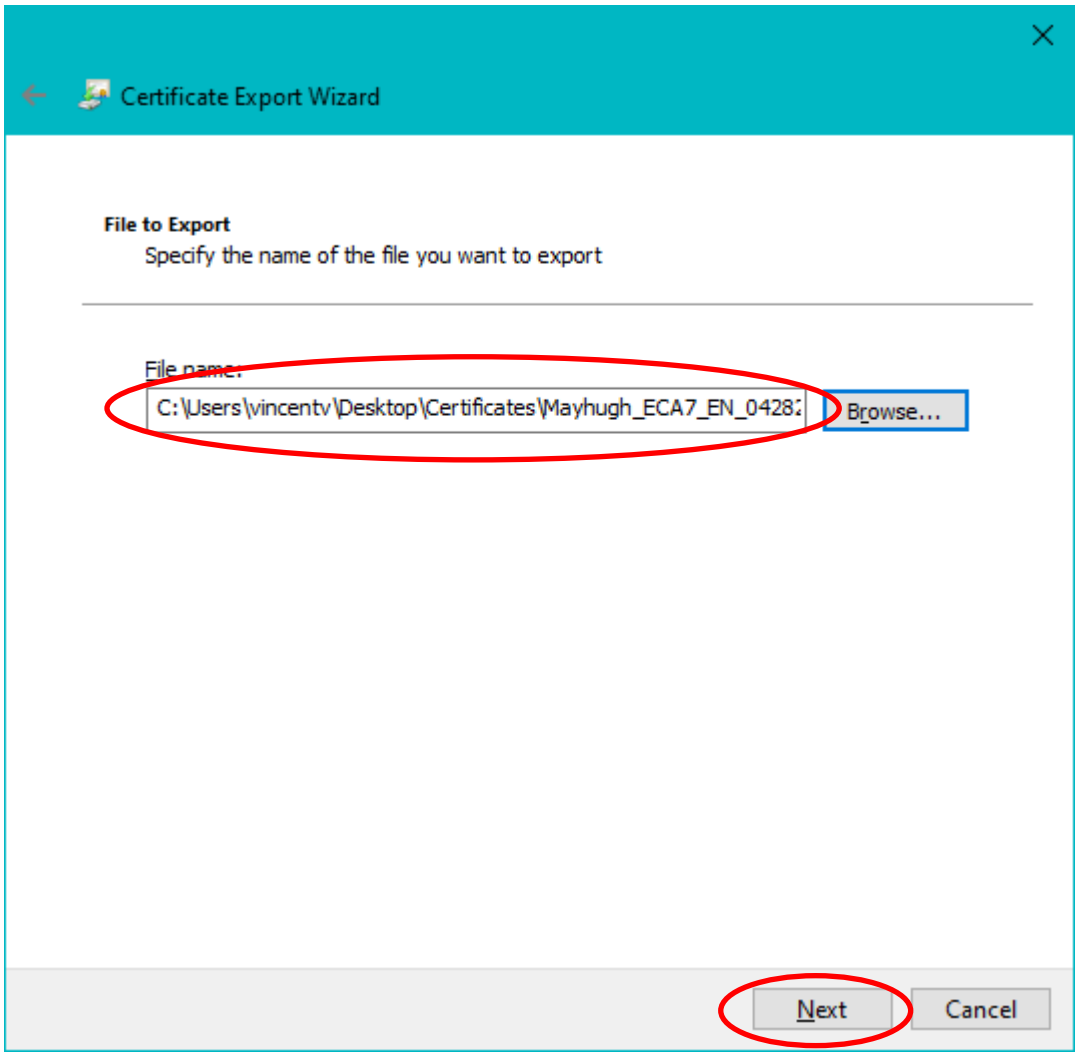
21. Click the **Browse...** button.



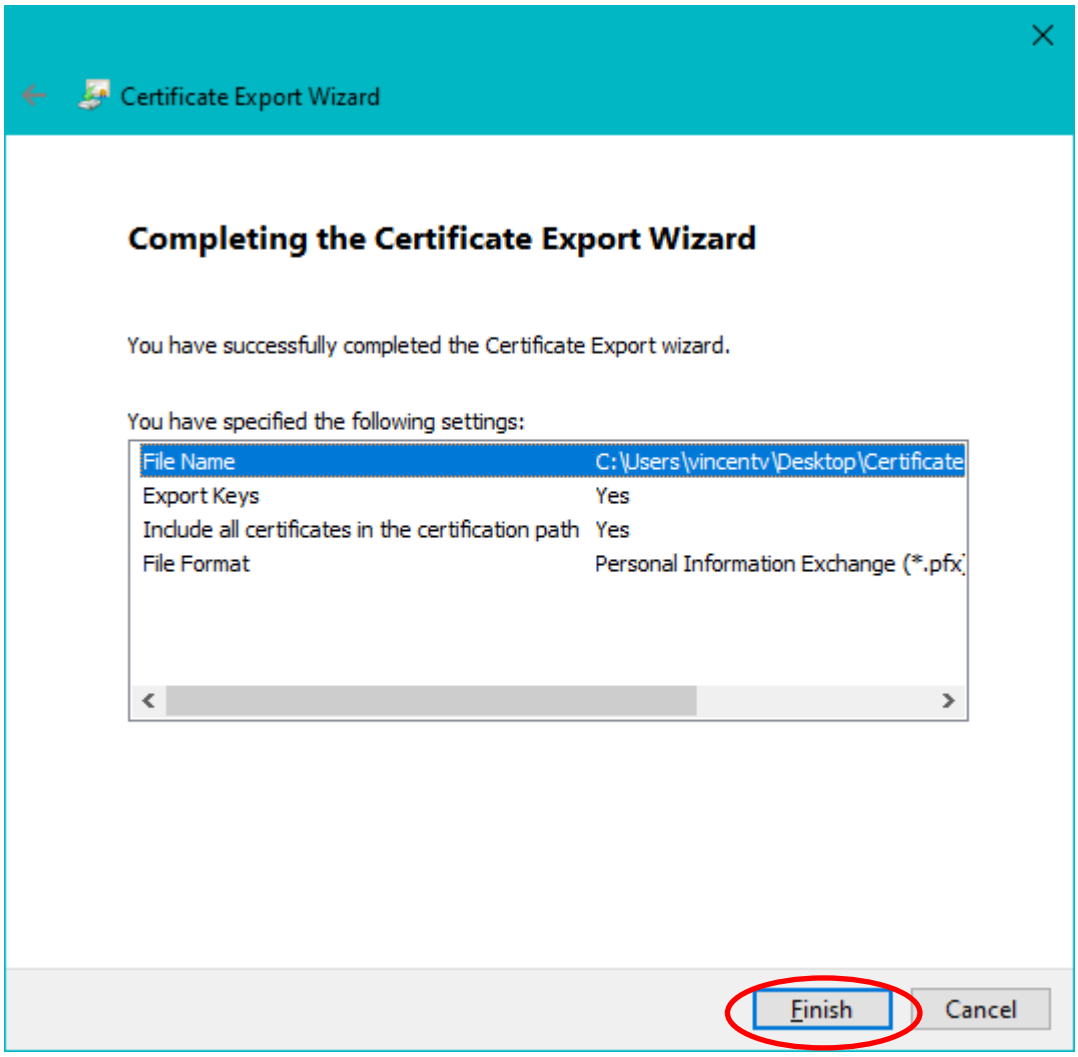
22. Enter a file name. We recommend that you make the filename "Yourlastname_ECA7_ID_MonthDayYear" use ID for your IDentity certificate and EN for you ENcryption certificate. YYYY should be the year that the certificate was requested; "2020" for 2020. And then click the **Save** button.



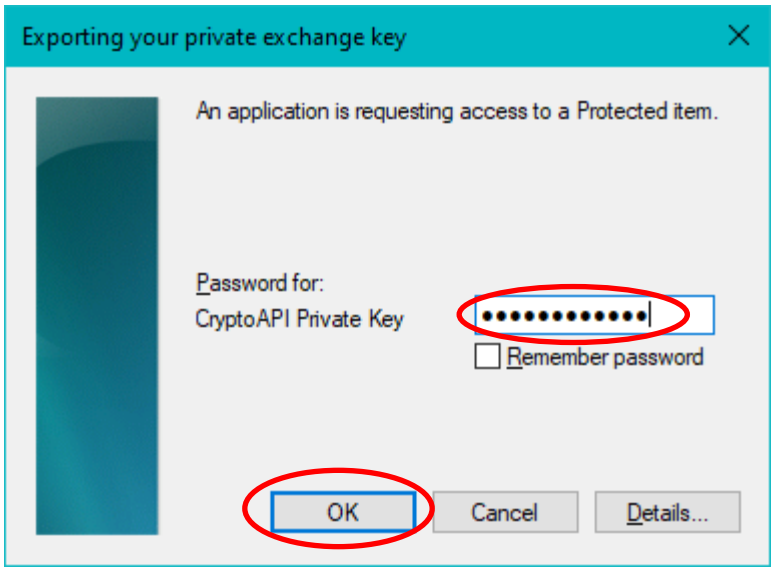
23. Back on the File to Export dialog, confirm that the path and file name are correct and then click the **Next** button.


Certificate Export Wizard
File to Export
Specify the name of the file you want to export
File name:
C:\Users\vincentv\Desktop\Certificates\Mayhugh_ECA7_EN_0428
Browse...
Next
Cancel

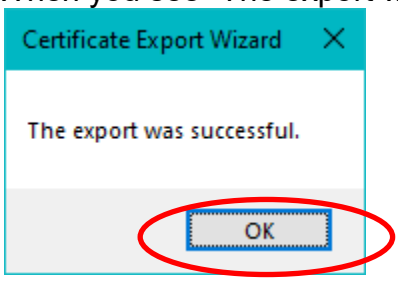
24. Click the **Finish** button.



25. In the Exporting your private exchange key dialog, enter the password that you previously assigned to protect your certificate private key and Click the **OK** button. NOTE: If there is no text box for you to enter a password, it means that no password was assigned to protect the certificate private key when you requested (or last installed) your certificate. Just click the **OK** button. Then see the instruction “Assigning a password to your certificate in Internet Explorer.”



26. When you see “The export was successful”; click the **OK** button.



27. Congratulations, you have successfully created certificate back-up files.