Common questions about EFS

Common questions about the IUB's electronic filing system (EFS) typically fall into one of three categories:
- General questions
- Filing questions (including rules, types of files accepted, filing maps/GIS, confidentiality)
- Searching questions (finding files, downloading)

General Questions

What is EFS?
The IUB's electronic filing system (EFS) is a web-based application used to receive electronic filings from external users. EFS is the repository of most documents electronically filed with the IUB and orders issued by the IUB in proceedings initiated beginning in 2009. EFS makes orders and non-confidential documents available on the IUB website for public searching and download. The IUB's rules governing electronic filing and identifying exceptions to the electronic filing requirement are found at 199 Iowa Administrative Code chapter 14.

What is IUB 24/7?
IUB 24/7 is a web application that allows companies, utilities, and individuals that interact with the IUB to manage and update their individual and company information with the IUB. Companies file their annual reports in IUB 24/7. Annual reports are available for public inspection in IUB 24/7.

Why do I have to register in IUB 24/7?
User registration and account information is managed in IUB 24/7. All users will need to sign up in IUB 24/7 to be able to file in EFS. The single account will be used for both IUB 24/7 and EFS. If you are associated with a registered company you may need to contact your company administrator or IUB staff to request that your account is linked to your company account.

How is EFS organized?
EFS organizes documents in dockets and filings.
A docket is a set of one or more filings, each containing one or more documents pertinent to one proceeding. Docket types are intended to reflect the general content of the case and applicable procedural characteristics. A list of docket types is available on the IUB website's Docket Designations page.

A filing is a set of one or more documents submitted together and related to a particular docket. Documents may be filed in PDF, Excel, or GIF formats. They are classified within EFS by document type reflective of the function of the document – motion, petition, testimony, exhibit, map, memo, etc. Tariff Books – Use the Tariff search to locate a utility company's tariff. A company's tariff book can be located using its company number. To search for a four-digit company number, use the Company Search in EFS. (Example: T-CoNo)

Can I download multiple documents?
EFS allows you to download up to 10 documents at a time. View this video about disabling your pop-up blocker to allow multiple downloads.

How do I retrieve dockets prior to 2009?
Most orders issued prior to 2009 are not available in EFS. Customer service staff is uploading historical documentation on an ad-hoc basis. Consider searching by docket number.
If you are unable to locate the documents, email Customer Service staff at ITsupport@iub.iowa.gov to request a copy of orders or documents in EFS.

How will users be notified if the EFS system is down?
If the outage is expected to last more than 30 minutes and the IUB website is available, a notice will be posted on the IUB website (iub.iowa.gov) homepage. Scheduled maintenance will also be posted on the IUB website.

Daily Filing Summary
The Daily Filing Summary search will return a list of many of the filings made with the IUB as well as all the orders issued by the IUB by date for any day or a time period beginning in 2009.

System hardware and software requirements
EFS must be accessed through a web browser. Supported web browsers are:
- Microsoft Internet Explorer (5.5 SP2, 6.0 SP2, or 7.0, 8.0, 9.0,10.0, 11.0)
- Firefox (1.5 or higher)
- Google Chrome

Most documents in EFS are stored as PDF (portable document format) files. Adobe Reader, or similar software, is required to view PDF files.

To download the latest version of Adobe Reader, go to http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html. Spreadsheets or work papers require the Microsoft Excel Application to view.

Also, make sure pop-up blockers are disabled for the site, as there are many functions that occur within a pop-up window (e.g. docket searches, calendar pop-ups). To turn off the pop-up blocker in Microsoft Internet Explorer, select the Tools menu, then choose Pop-up Blocker. If the Blocker is off, EFS will work fine. If the Blocker is on, select Pop-up Blocker Settings and add efs.iowa.gov/efs to the list of exceptions so pop-ups are enabled for EFS.

The EFS web-based application is best viewed with an 800 x 600 screen resolution or higher.

Are cover letters required?
No. Cover letters are not required but can be useful for staff to assist in understanding what is being filed. Cover letters may be attached to a document or filed within the same filing.

How do I submit information that pertains to multiple dockets?
If the IUB has formally consolidated dockets into one, parties will receive notice of the consolidation and will only need to file once in the consolidated docket. Prior to consolidation, parties must file in each affected docket. See the docket summary screen to show any dockets related to that docket.

What are the character limits for filing titles, document titles, and file names in EFS?
Filing and document titles may be up to 200 characters. The file name for the actual file you attach has an 80-character limit.

My document requires a signature; how should I submit the document?
Per 199 IAC 14.13, a handwritten signature will not be accepted. You must either redact, use a digital

signature, or replace the signature with an /s/ (Example: /s/ Jon Q. Public) prior to filing.

Should an affidavit be filed as a separate document?
It is not required to be filed separate and is recommended to be added at the end of the document.

What happens if my filing is rejected?
If a filing is rejected, Customer Service staff will provide the filer a reason for the rejection. The filer will receive the rejection notice if a valid email address was provided at the time of filing. Notification of a rejected filing will not be provided to other parties on the service list or to the OCA or IUB staff. All documents in a rejected filing must be resubmitted once the appropriate corrections have been made.

My filing was rejected and I resubmitted it the following day. Does the rejected filing count toward meeting the filing deadline?
Only a filing that is accepted for filing on or before the filing deadline will meet the deadline. If a filer is unable to resubmit the filing before the deadline, it should be resubmitted as soon as possible and accompanied by a request to accept a late filing.

My filing has been accepted and I want to withdraw it. What do I need to do?
Documents are not typically removed from EFS. Once a filing has been accepted, the filer must file a request to withdraw the filing. The filing is not taken down unless it is determined that confidential or sensitive information was provided at the time of the filing.

Who do I contact if I have an issue with filing electronically?
IUB IT support staff is available to answer your questions by phone or email during regular business hours, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except state holidays. Call (515) 725-7300 or email ITsupport@iub.iowa.gov.

Filing Questions

File types
What file types will the system accept?
As of June 24, 2016, all documents must be filed in a PDF, Excel (.xls or .xlsx) or GIF format. Whenever possible, PDF files must be full-text searchable, making them consistent with 199 IAC 14.5(7), which states: "Any text-based document which has been scanned for electronic filing must be full-text searchable to the extent that is reasonably possible." Documents filed in PDF format should be reviewed by the filer before filing to assure that pages are rotated so they are "right-side-up" when viewed on a computer screen.

What are the size limits of the individual computer files when uploading documents or spreadsheets into EFS?
It is preferred to keep documents under 5 megabytes in size and under 20 documents per filing.

Can I file a zipped file in EFS?
No. EFS will only accept PDF, Excel, and GIS files (.pdf, .xls, .xlsx, .kmz, .kml, .shp, .shx, .dbf, .prj).
I am submitting several documents in a single filing. Where can I find guidance on naming the filing and documents?

Review EFS Filing Standards

Can I combine multiple petitions into one document?
Each document submitted into EFS will be assigned a single document type (Example: testimony, exhibit, correspondence, intervention, motion, etc). For ease of processing and retrieval, it is preferred that requests that fall under multiple document types be filed as separate documents but within the same filing.

Can I file one or more MS Excel workbooks containing live links in EFS?
Although it is possible to upload a set of linked workbooks into EFS, the links between files will not work once they have been processed in EFS. Links between spreadsheets within a single workbook will work in EFS.

Filing Rules
Are there rules regarding electronic filing?
Review 199 IAC chapter 14, the administrative rules regarding Electronic Filing.

Maps/GIS Files
How do I file a GIS file type?
Filing a GIS file follows the same process as filing PDF or Excel documents. See our EFS Quick Filing Guide document for how to file in EFS. For more information on filing best practices, see our EFS Filing Standards.

Do I still need to submit a PDF map?
Yes, PDF maps are still required per 199 IAC 14.8(1).

Confidentiality
How do I indicate the company for which the filing is being submitted?
Each filing requires a submitting party. The submitting party is the person or entity that represents the filing and is not necessarily the entity or person who is uploading the filing. A common example is a law firm representing a utility company.

In general, the person filing the document can select "file on behalf of" if they are filing for someone else. The entity should be selected or entered, a person should only be used if entity is not an option (Example: An individual intervening in a case).

I have submitted a filing that contains only confidential information. What notices are sent?
A public document indicating that a confidential document has been filed is required to be uploaded, and notice of that public document is sent to all parties.

Searching Questions

How do I search for a specific filing in EFS?
At the top of the EFS home page, select Search. Select "Document Search" on the left column then complete fields as known (e.g., docket number, filing title, or date filed). Review the Instructions on How to Search in EFS document.

How do I download a GIS file in EFS?
Click 'View' next to the GIS file you are interested in. This will begin the download of the file. To view the file, you will need to obtain software that is able to view map files. Google Earth is a free application that can be used to view these types of files.
What is a service list and why am I on it?

A service list is a list of EFS filers who wish to receive notification that a new file has been added to a docket. Each docket has a service list. Any filer of a document in EFS is automatically added to the service list. EFS sends a notification to all members included in the docket's service list any time a new file is processed.

What is legal service?
The IUB is obligated to provide notification of legal documents filed within EFS.

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