

What's in a (file) name?

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The California Cancer Registry (CCR) has a standard on file names that you may, or may not, be aware of. This file naming definition is currently defined in Section II.4 in the [California Cancer Reporting System Standards Volume II](#).

The standard is defined as follows:

- A file will start with a 3 character case file suffix.
- **Plus the year showing the year the file was created.**
- Plus the three digit day of the year (001-366) showing the day of the year the file was created.
- Plus a single letter (A-Z) sequence, beginning with A, for files created on the same day.

As an example: The first New Case file created on February 1, 2016 by a facility with a casefile suffix of HSP will be named: HSP2016032A.XAA.

If you use CNExT, there is a way to define how your transmit file will be named. The **default** setting (which is defined to a standard from the 1990's) is to create a file with the case file suffix, the day of the year, and a sequence letter. A potential problem with this setting occurs when a facility does not regularly delete their older transmit files. Say our fictitious facility created a transmit file on June 30, 2013. The file would be named HSP181A.XAA. Fast forward to June 30, 2015. If the older file was not deleted, CNExT is programmed to sequence the file name and would create HSP181**B**.XAA (notice the "B" in the file name?). So ask yourself: how easy would it be to mistake files called HSP181**A** for HSP181**B** when it came time to send the file?

In order to better see when a file is created just by looking at the file name, the Cancer Registry of Greater California (CRGC) and the CCR strongly recommends that file names include the year.

For CNExT users, this can be set in the following manner:

From the main menu select Tools > Options...

From the Program Options pop up window, click the Options tab (if not already selected).

Look for the **Filename Mask** drop down box and select any of these 4 options:

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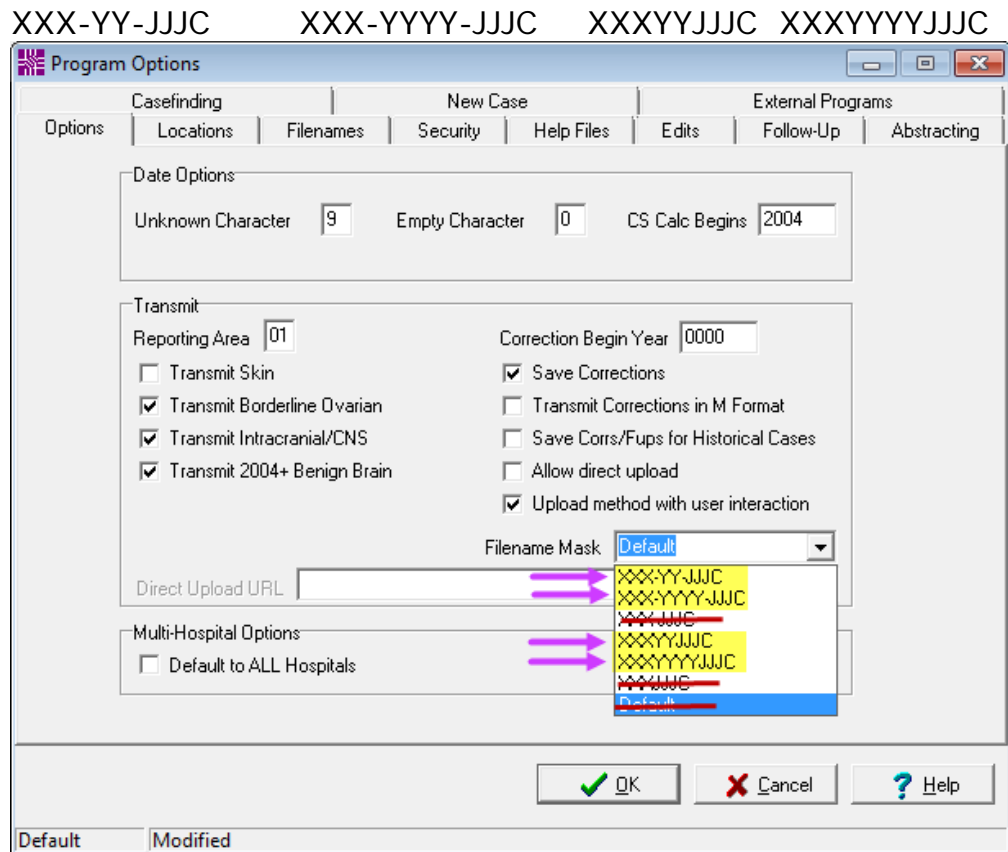


Figure 1 - CNEXT Program Options window

Given our above example with the fictitious facility and a file name mask set to "XXX-YYYY-JJJC" the file created on June 30, 2013 would have been named HSP-**2013**-181A whereas the file created on June 30, 2015 would have been named HSP-**2015**-181A. If you were to look at these files, wouldn't it be easier to see that the HSP-**2015**-181A is the file you should be sending?

If you are not using CNEXT then perhaps you may want to make an enhancement request for your software vendor to generate the files with California's standard built in.