

KB#11348

QUESTION

How can I chain a certificate in PFX format?

ANSWER

The certificate chain is essentially a certificate path from signed cert to intermediate to CA root cert to indicate that the certificate is trusted.

[http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/windows/desktop/aa376515\(v=vs.85\).aspx](http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/windows/desktop/aa376515(v=vs.85).aspx)

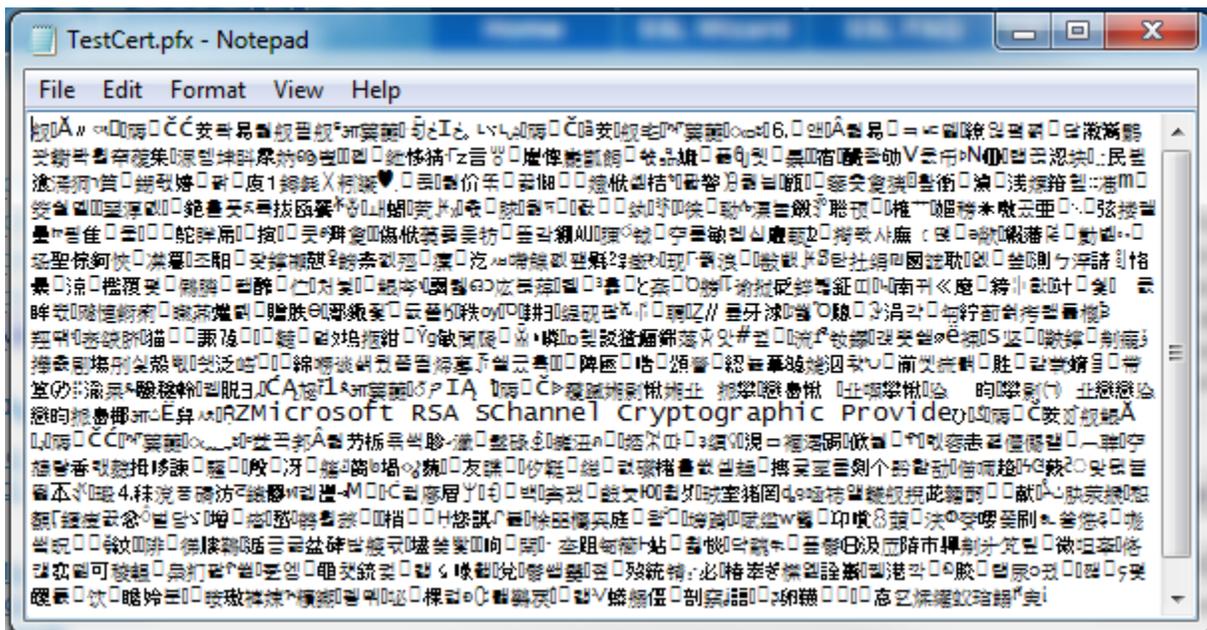
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Certification_path_validation_algorithm

In some environments, Java and other application may have difficulty in validating the certificate chaining path if only the signed cert is provided

Chaining a certificate makes it easier for Java and other application in some environments to validate the certificate validity path. A chained cert basically has all of the certs in the certificate path chain in one file.

To chain a certificate, it is necessary to break apart the signed certificate , intermediate certificate (s), and root certificate into individual files and put them physically into one certificate file.

.pfx formatted certificates are encoded in such a way that make this difficult to do easily (if at all).



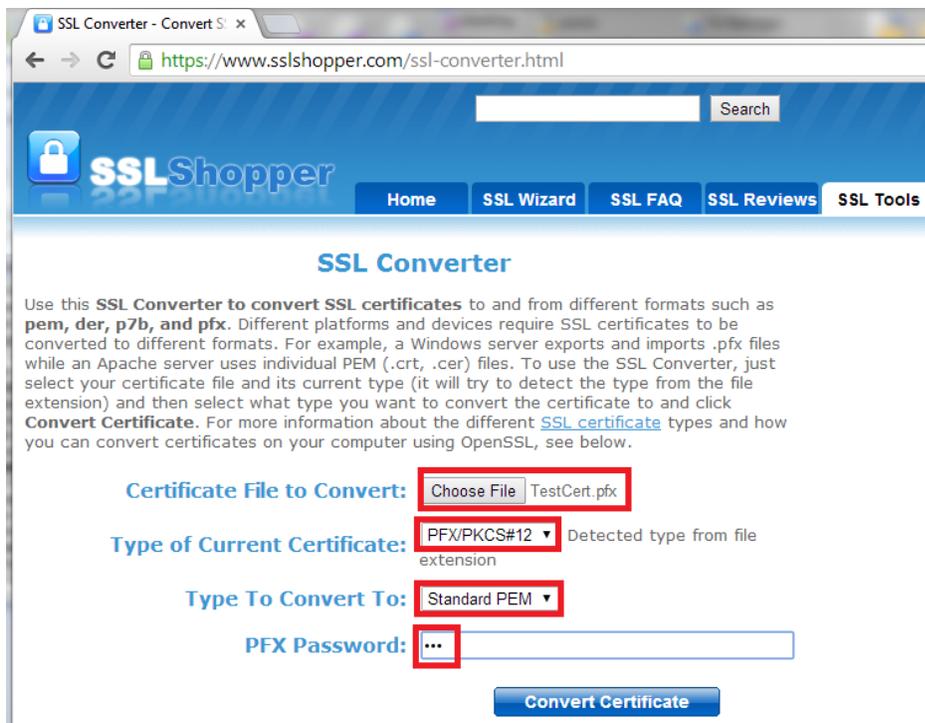
To chain a cert in .pfx format, it will first be necessary to convert the certificate to .pem format.

The absolute easiest way to do this is to use SSLShopper's online SSL Converter (<https://www.sslshopper.com/ssl-converter.html>)

SSLShopper's online SSL Converter is an online version of OpenSSL's command line conversion utility (<http://slproweb.com/products/Win32OpenSSL.html>)

It is preferable to use SSLShopper as it is much faster and eliminates potential human error in mistyping the conversion commands. SSLShopper's SSL Converter uses HTTPS encryption when performing the conversion process.

To use it, simply specify the .pfx certificate. Select **Standard PEM** for the **Type To Convert To**. Enter the PFX password.



The screenshot shows the SSL Converter web interface. The browser address bar displays <https://www.sslshopper.com/ssl-converter.html>. The page header includes the SSLShopper logo and navigation links: Home, SSL Wizard, SSL FAQ, SSL Reviews, and SSL Tools. The main heading is "SSL Converter". Below the heading is a paragraph of instructions: "Use this SSL Converter to convert SSL certificates to and from different formats such as pem, der, p7b, and pfx. Different platforms and devices require SSL certificates to be converted to different formats. For example, a Windows server exports and imports .pfx files while an Apache server uses individual PEM (.crt, .cer) files. To use the SSL Converter, just select your certificate file and its current type (it will try to detect the type from the file extension) and then select what type you want to convert the certificate to and click Convert Certificate. For more information about the different SSL certificate types and how you can convert certificates on your computer using OpenSSL, see below." The form contains the following fields: "Certificate File to Convert:" with a "Choose File" button and the text "TestCert.pfx"; "Type of Current Certificate:" with a dropdown menu showing "PFX/PKCS#12" and the text "Detected type from file extension"; "Type To Convert To:" with a dropdown menu showing "Standard PEM"; and "PFX Password:" with a text input field containing three dots. A "Convert Certificate" button is located at the bottom of the form.

If the passphrase is correct, the converted .pem file should be downloaded successfully.

SSL Converter

Use this **SSL Converter to convert SSL certificates** to and from different formats such as **pem, der, p7b, and pfx**. Different platforms and devices require SSL certificates to be converted to different formats. For example, a Windows server exports and imports .pfx files while an Apache server uses individual PEM (.crt, .cer) files. To use the SSL Converter, just select your certificate file and its current type (it will try to detect the type from the file extension) and then select what type you want to convert the certificate to and click **Convert Certificate**. For more information about the different [SSL certificate](#) types and how you can convert certificates on your computer using OpenSSL, see below.

Certificate File to Convert: TestCert.pfx

Type of Current Certificate: Detected type from file extension

Type To Convert To:

PFX Password:

https://www.sslshopper.com/ssl-converter.html#

TestCert.pem

Show all downloads...

When you open the **.pem** file in **notepad**, you should see the certificate inside. If the private key is bundled inside the **.pfx**, you will also see the private key.

```

TestCert.pem - Notepad
File Edit Format View Help
Bag Attributes      Microsoft Local Key set: <No Values>      localKeyID: 01 00 00 00
friendlyName: 75a740ce-b8a0-46ea-900f-e5204bb9bfc8      Microsoft CSP Name: Microsoft RSA
Schannel Cryptographic ProviderKey Attributes      x509v3 Key Usage: 10 -----BEGIN PRIVATE
KEY-----MIIEvGIBADANBgkqhkiG9w0BAQEFAASCBgwggSkAgEAAoIBAQC9FtQ14OnpYsN7
Vy9zgIkaBbRzdtNhlhxFWuR1u9F4Gor/DigsQCUQFDtBmdxWT5aG5k+EV7Jj1GCz6sjGQFuqVRU
+/xJnV5gZf50iZ780FFxSISZ4AQx067VP7VSGvX7h31p1vbNMP3iC
0ppvZsqvFcojyknfPmjRK2lcyw6hYM9k/CtT8U5NpFKC73v59a/KUBhw8EzDFnv
0YZrwxG2cstE3SMCxoSQR5SuqPg4PxGsfHBKEdr+CauDMwvQhhj4u1qLrMTkd/i18u4wQM3B
+0ePRsrIqvZ0t2zbPLQBOAMD/X9eadMpuFFrDdsI540zLQ8dRGW55po
lFVaCpe7AgMBAECCggEAWlspjF7h38h6s1V4ka1eus224uIFIQuYhb/KHCRZCRLdc/Kknnqk/Dcz2T6rb
+AdfJHLyUgyHkxv1qN3xp7u5vQ2bh3UYOILmxEY0/LT5prc
K0oc4pk9pi1kNIagNq4YczB54F17atv3ckfDdyx7wrtvDeTcr75u9MNRnJwyhNjwn8L
+/3E5Hr8UmpPuxeIzurXHgOy4bT0mTUEIXE7AAbtZAD+E3mijJur10f7xou/wkoy8dFlf08gueumtffLy
+v7hbzrp3u1AWdhdSam1+6Zbj7Fu8sxvdcmwky5Qs4X
7D1usUQ0ijxTs2stsmJmtOz3rgbees6y/GOlEku5wQKBGQDSwK9Hag3h7h3TT6/D
ecmv1stPG0f/Lk1yG6lE3hbFbvKx6kIrzbmb2AwEPrQejNlpzggQ9K98vTjpxkG
LC3cAP4hyvWF2tT2ESlKQ4afFETu2i03uxq+o+oTYlBqM2lztqgFU/+kfxoNukT
/e00vZ9dLrrvx2pnjebRkXIfAwKbGQDM0CMcoR5MxywWCi117SE2GCxbvo1pmwiK
N8Qeszw6+60kx1prNsxB4s51rHGqKexq0QWR/prcuEXuXLNwk+OnkX29TXSGoEP4mak3QtYwqhevezzUE7dqg/KR
+jwWahUuXn1H3T0Qdal586B4Gw2SUCWLLARyJ2I
jw8YCDZK6QKBGQCBudvbkvazWANw7TJIVry0xgYvBy0kDgB3SpKxqxwCkx1PERX
nXTApeOzuPyyJwTixkFzZTB3A1wtOjLPoydaV4UJXJv2kfyHTFFeLmc31SrSaM
ph7kmw9kjcP8466DAEwfhfexzrv5++IrZ7CoiJK/09Ftu2es/knssQVCQKBGbd
Fh1RBGSjCDnJfUuxazwTlZifPm5AZc/TY0qjptinNm8EIGwg4BG/atvU1K8Ddc7J
z/sd5JQSKFP8GjEXF4MofEY0+nf7aILRhzi67vIB11aobcdXSKrJeuKINUPMT9swEmPbx0859uBrFJ8Ll+7ubv
+FREU79P3IGFWftRahaOGBAKMGwm1B1QyNbXXCEKIiV4nvg9m65sC+XdyXCmst+8Nnft2OnrC
+6E6KPMww4x9ubQ9Aa/H2UAOrPj1Sb
m00R8d32V94y5GJz1z1Pugf1k387VRwrDmynx9LJ9V9FE1U0epZ4XB5HQeQgTKAcw6CkTrj4ZyQvvrOs+WJrEeb7
-----END PRIVATE KEY-----Bag Attributes      localKeyID: 01 00 00 00      friendlyName:
TestCertsubject=/CN=qs0169_forest_intranet_qsissuer=/CN=qs0169_forest_intranet_qs-----BEGIN
CERTIFICATE-----MIIc9jCCAd6gAwIBAgIQw3YKN441j5hIPRoIerSyZZANBgkqhkiG9w0BAQUFADAK
MSIWIAYDVQQDExlnczAXNjkuZm9yZXXN0LmludHJhbWV0LmdzMB4XDTE0MDYwNDZ
MjI1M10XDTE0MDYwNDZMFAwJDEIMCAGA1UEAxMZZ3MwMTY5LmZvcmlvdz5p
bnRyYw5ldc5nczCCASIwDQYJKoZIhvcNAQEBBQADggEPADCCAQoCggEBAL0w1CXg
6e1iw3tXL30AgpofTHN202EuHEVA5Hw70XgaiV8M1BjBxRB8NNUz3FZP1ozKT4RXskmUYLPqyMZB
+6pVFT7/EmdxmBkXnsJnvw4V/FihJngBDHTrtu/tvIa9fUheWmW9
s0w/eIL5mm9mq8vygnKsD8+aNEravZJzDqFgZ2T8K1PxTk2kuoLve/n1r8pQGHD
wTMN82/RhmvDEBzyXN7dIwLE6xBVJFK6o+Dg/Eax8ceOr1H4Jq4MxBBCGGPi7wou
cxMp3+Lxy7jBAZch7R49Gysiq9k63bns8tAE4Ax39f15p0ym4UwsN2wjng7MtDx1
EZZLmmiUVVok17sCAwEAAMkMCiWcWYDVR0PBAQDAGQwMBGA1UdJQMMAoGCCSg
AQUBwMBMA0GCsSqsIb3DQEBBQUAA4IBAQBwsc6ysK5s85U3FthMTwuwho20HXMN
KoktFfn4bm1fFUnlI4BXE7C14U2oJwPS9Tvy1+1QSMhuzXBnchrvtgAXMIoomj49Dirt3whN3bkq9JAbkBPdqt5R
+9//T8qrubzquScxnw/uLwfw3U5GADI8tGRYwzb
nZUsERjODYV84VsKgxMr4yhUxvvaXBdso2E/CRJCGF6ghYuznHrtv+Js0J1N4EYX
ctJozlhxzt0cbAGEdM8N5oo0EseNnkuu98IZqZ4cq7ome/q0tUIGQtDlZpooZQHxUZFAD987B87SM
+9auJErCEfStxZ0an5cglkPzXokor1ys74ty00n0n-----END CERTIFICATE-----

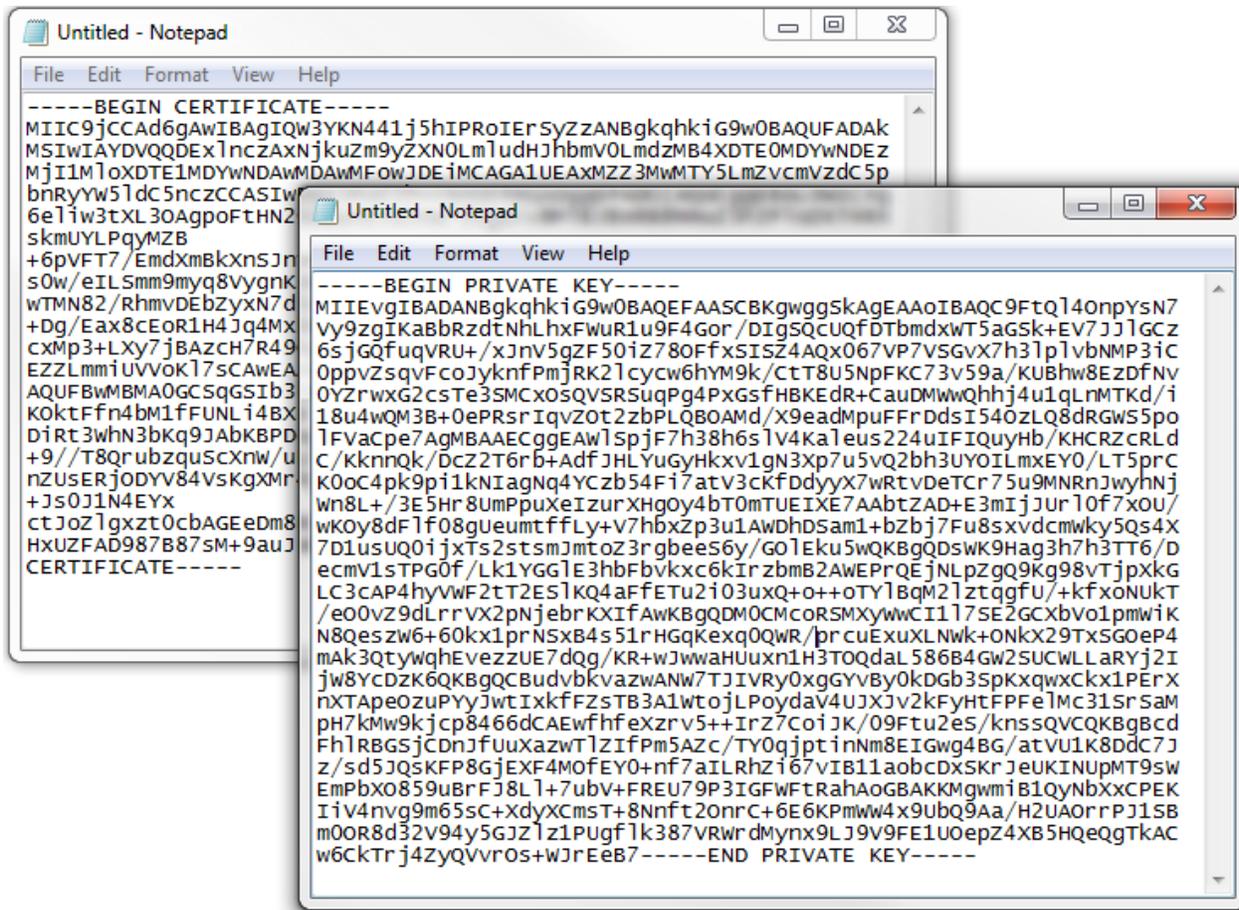
```

private key

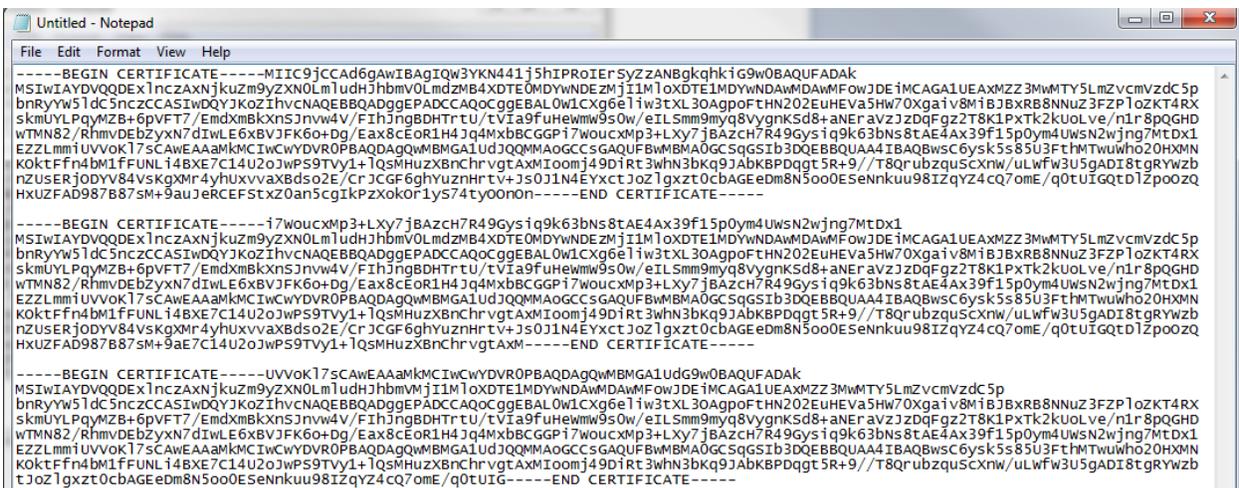
certificate

Open a blank notepad, then copy/paste from -----BEGIN PRIVATE KEY----- to -----END PRIVATE KEY----- .
Save the file as <whateverNameYouWant>.key

Open a blank notepad, then copy/paste from -----BEGIN CERTIFICATE ----- to -----END CERTIFICATE -----.
Save the file as <whateverNameYouWant>.crt



NOTE: If the .pfx file contains multiple -----BEGIN/END CERTIFICATE -----, copy paste them on top of each other in the order they are in the .pem file and save the file as **Chained<whateverNameYouWant>.crt**. This is now a chained certificate, and can stop here and implement into EFT.

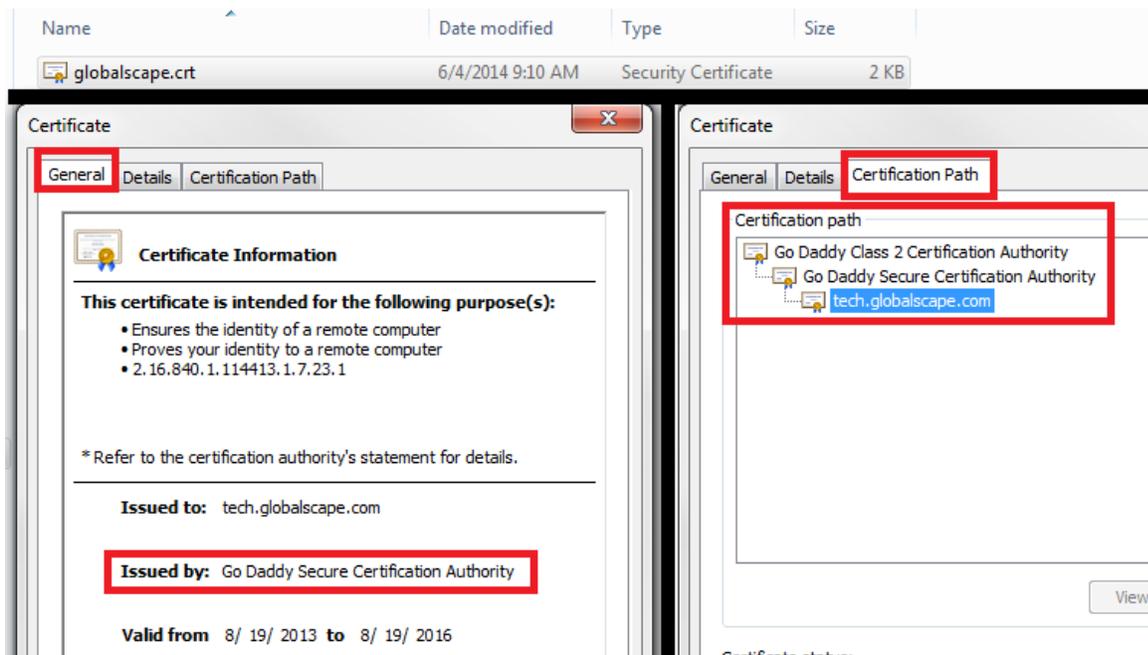


ALTERNATIVELY: If the .pfx file ONLY contains one -----BEGIN CERTIFICATE ----- to -----END CERTIFICATE -
---- segment...

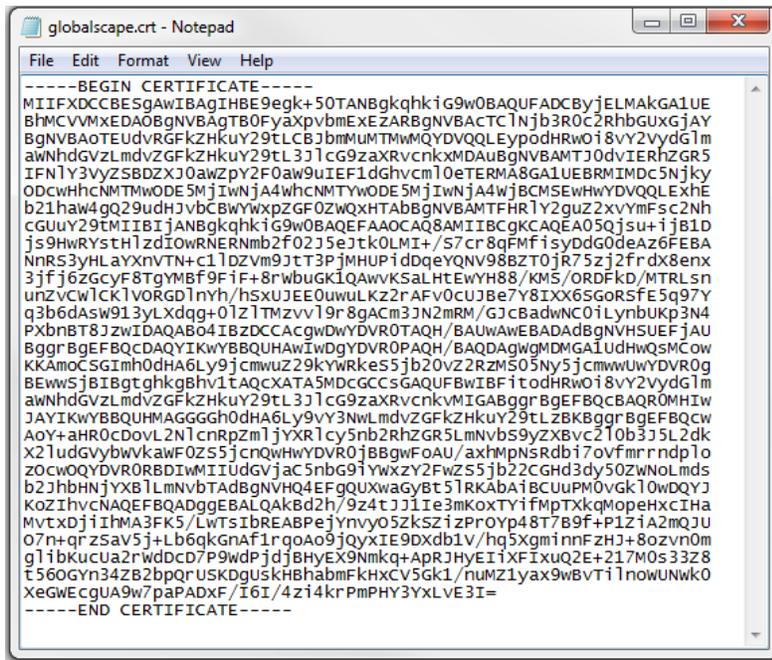
First verify that the certificate is trusted and signed by a Certificate Authority (CA).

We can see that the below certificate has been signed by a CA.

This is called the “signed certificate”.

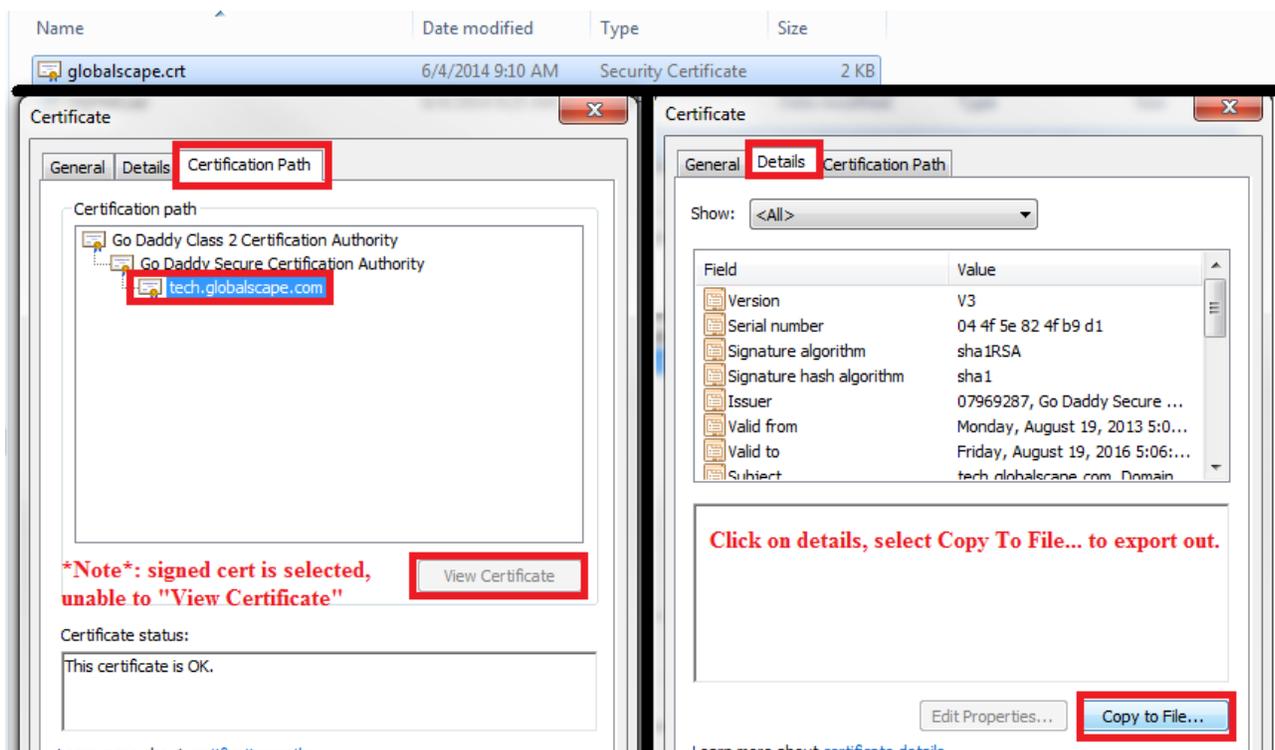


When we open the certificate in notepad, we see that it only has one certificate block.

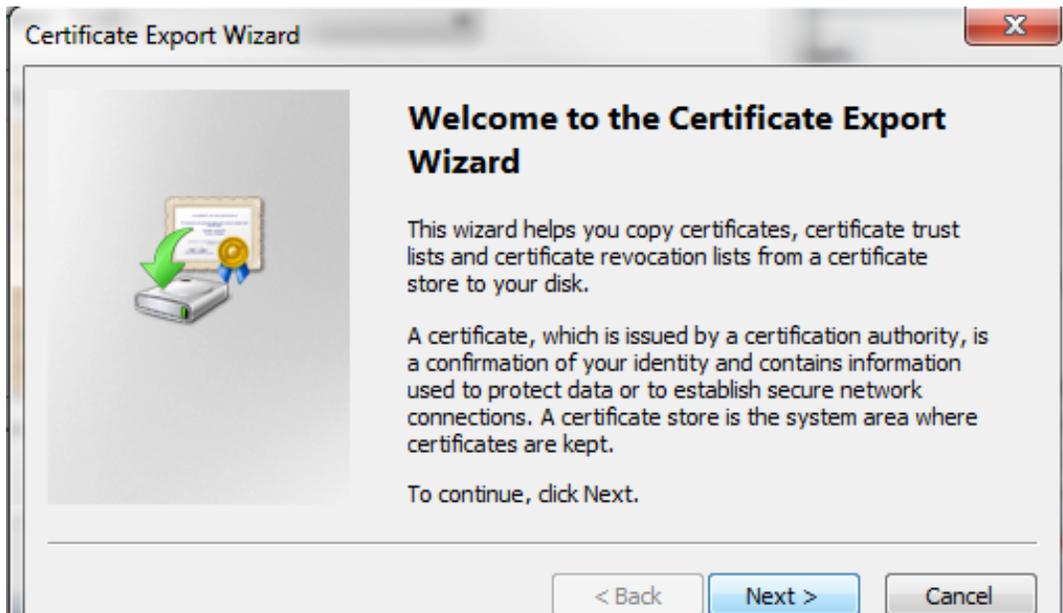


We will have to export out the individual certificates of the chain so that we can merge them into one file.

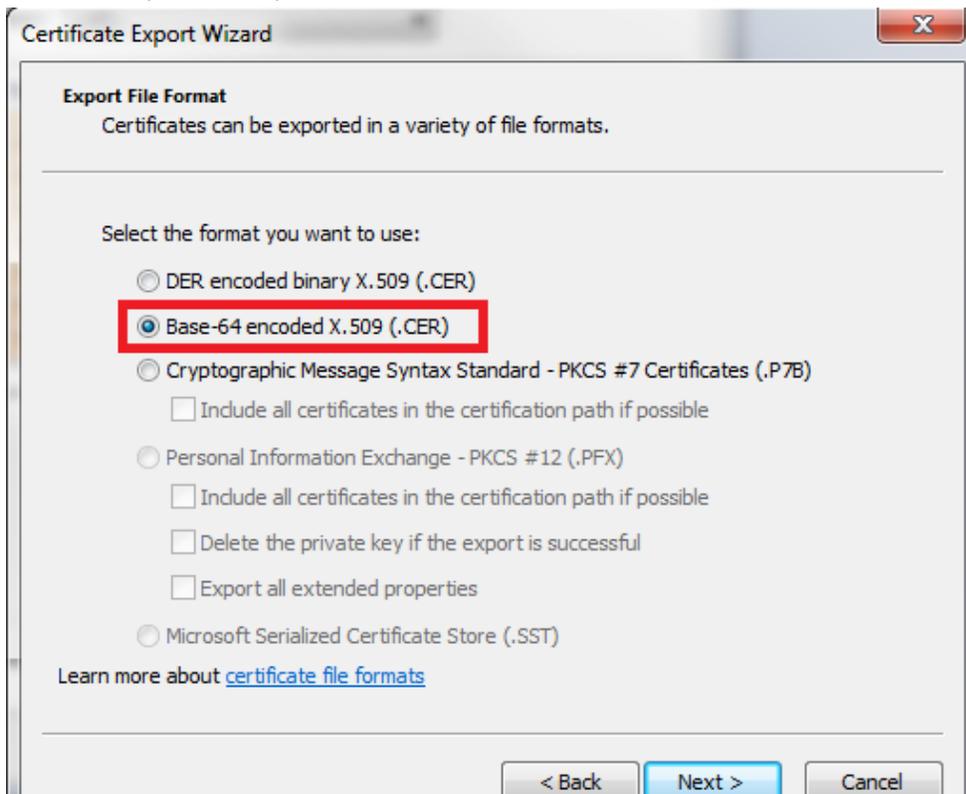
To do this, double click on the **signed cert**. Navigate to the **Details** tab and select **Copy To File...**



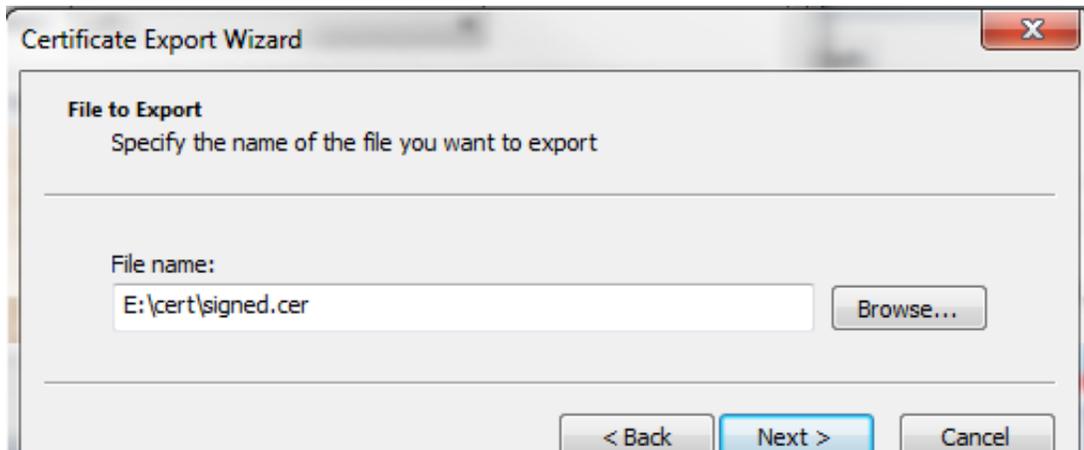
You will now be presented with the Certificate Export Wizard:



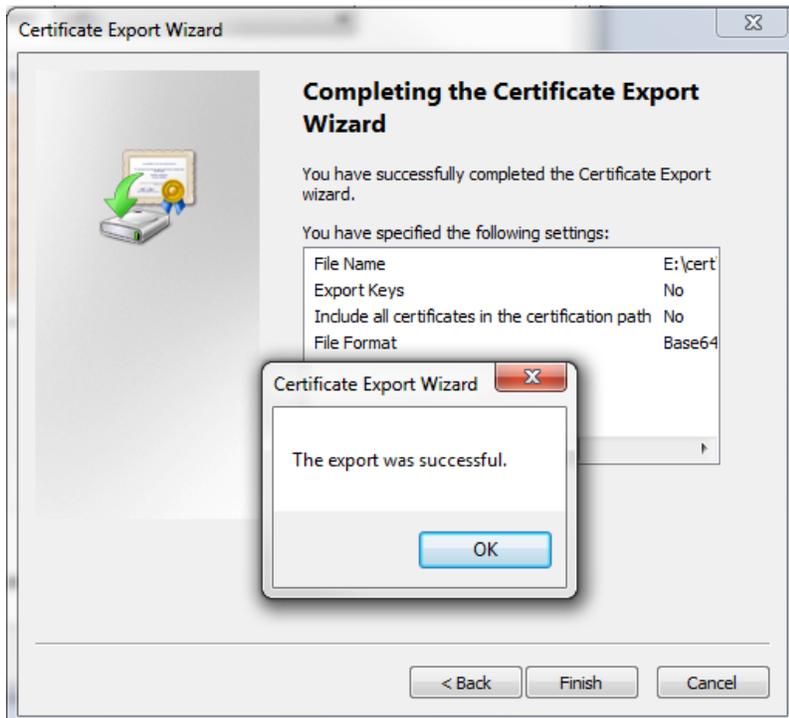
Select the option to export as **Base-64 encoded X.509 (.CER)**:

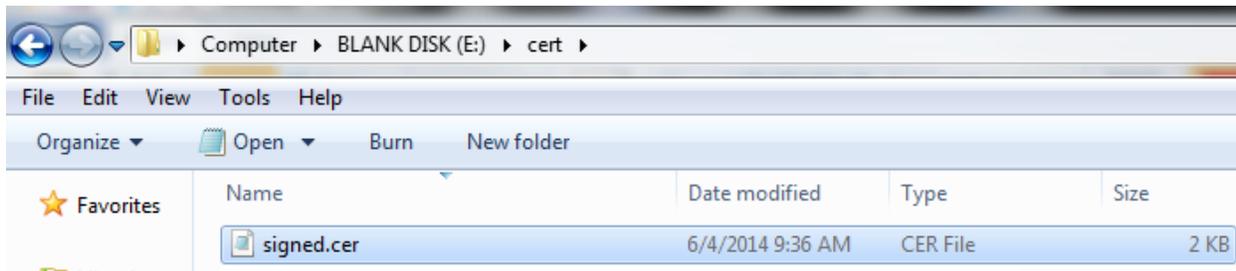


Specify a name for the certificate. It is a good idea to label them based on their certificate level so that it will be easier to pick them out when merging them. In this example, I'll name the certificate **signed.cer**, because it is the signed certificate.

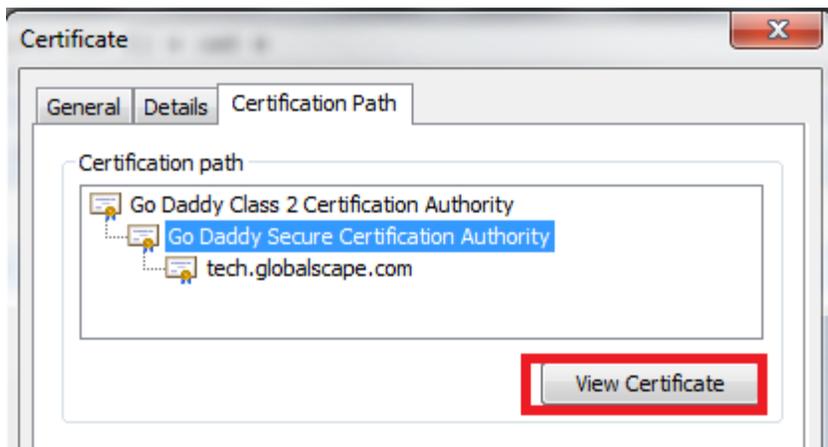


The signed certificate should now be exported:

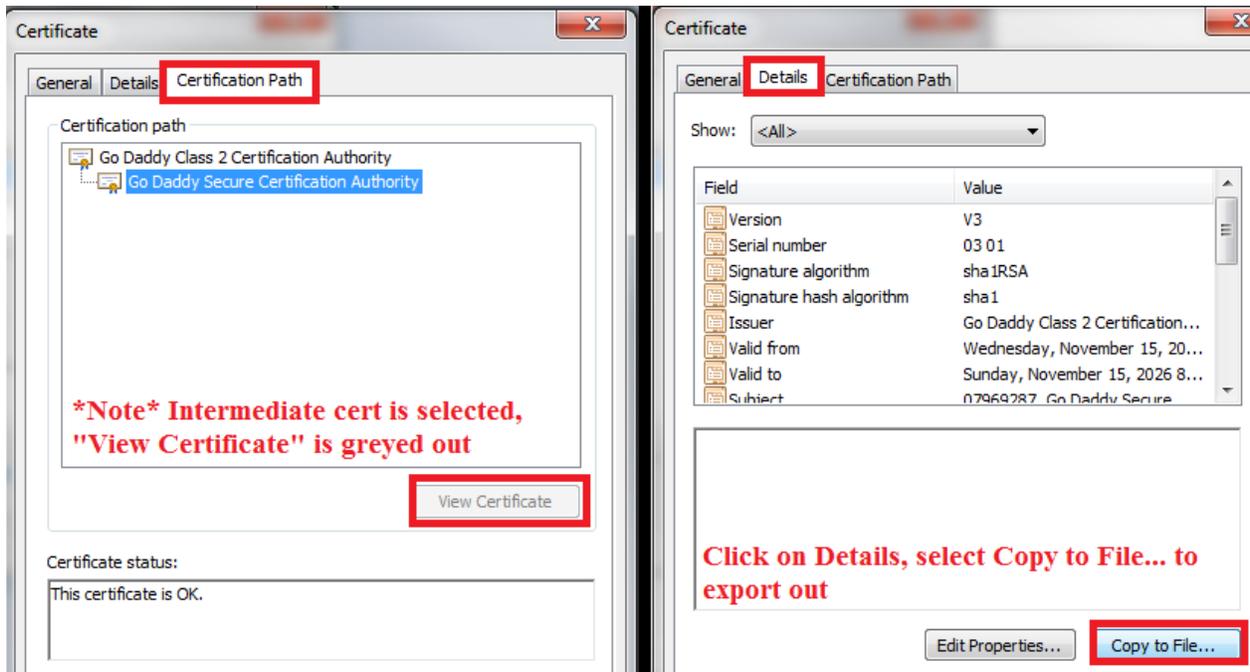




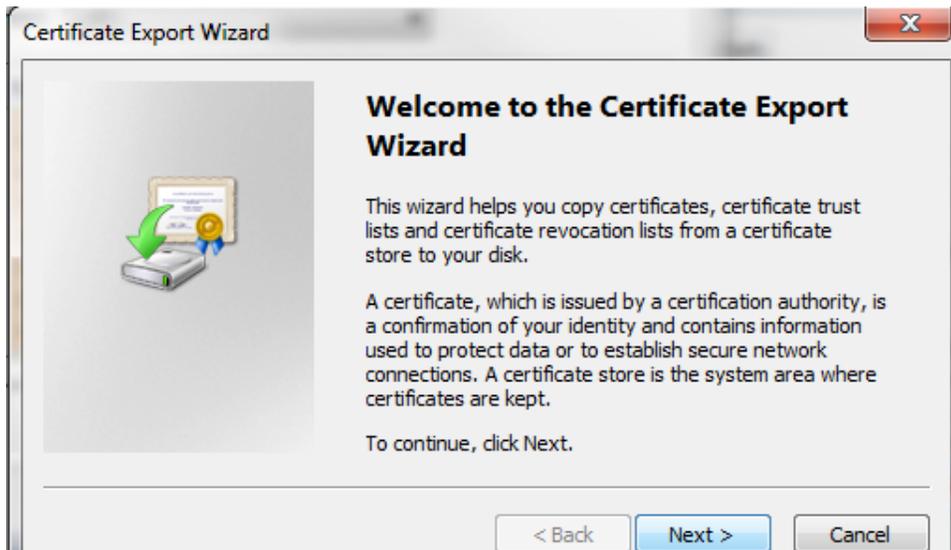
Next, click on the **Intermediate** certificate (there are generally 1-3 of them), and select **View Certificate**:



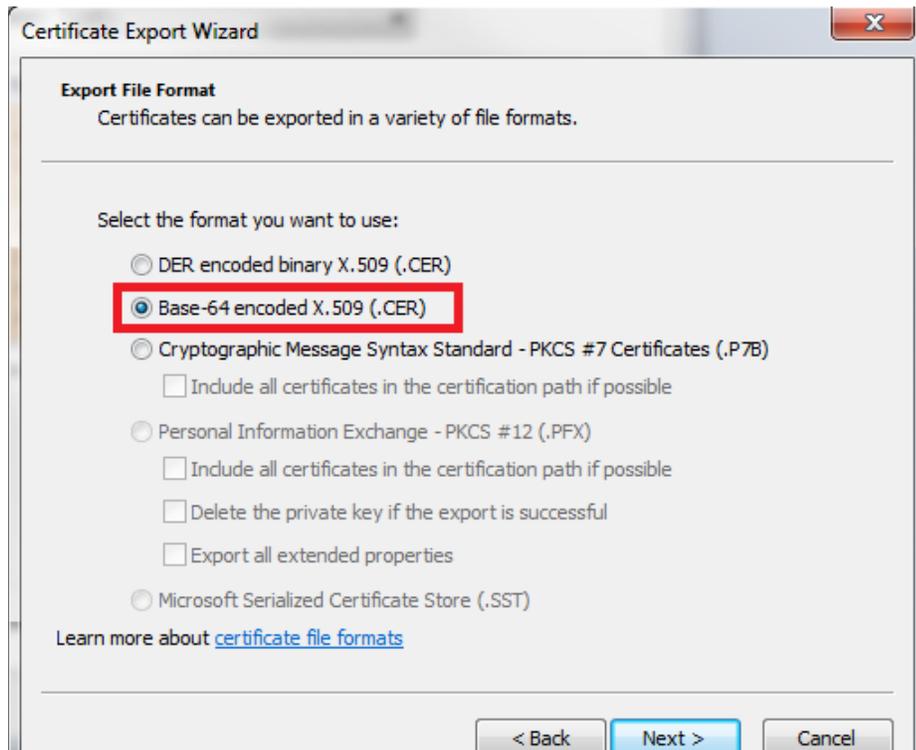
The intermediate certificate should now be selected.
Navigate to the **Details** tab and select **Copy To File...**



You will now be presented with the Certificate Export Wizard:

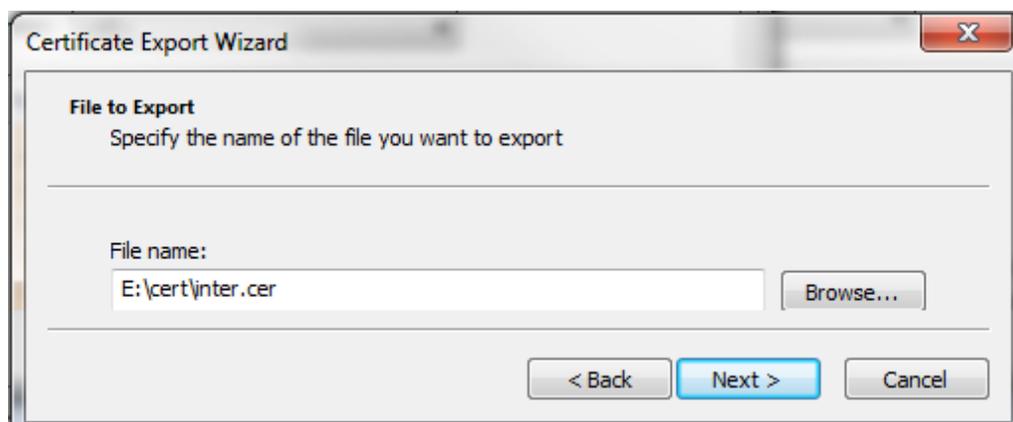


Select the option to export as **Base-64 encoded X.509 (.CER)**:

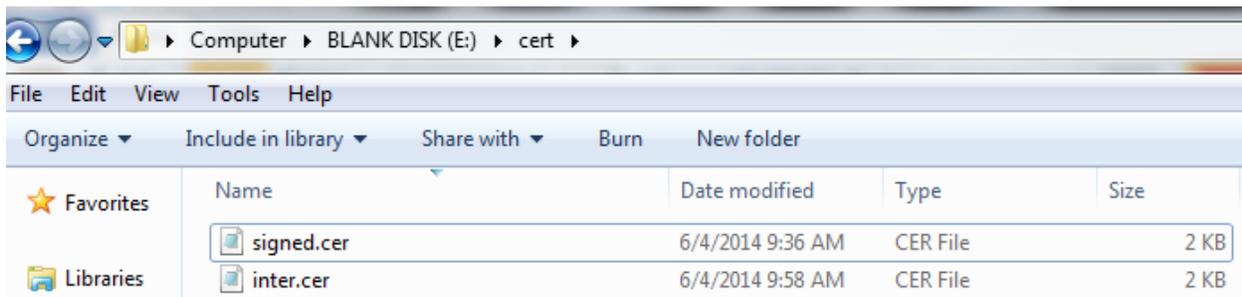
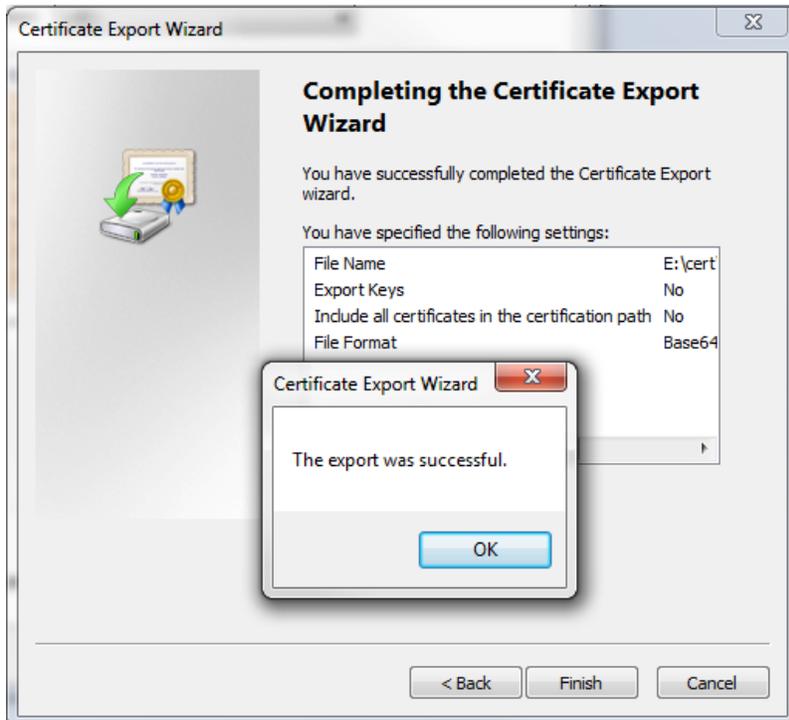


Similar to before, it's a good idea to name the certificates based on the certificate level so that it will be easier to pick them out when merging them. In this example, I'll name the certificate **inter.cer**, because it is the intermediate certificate.

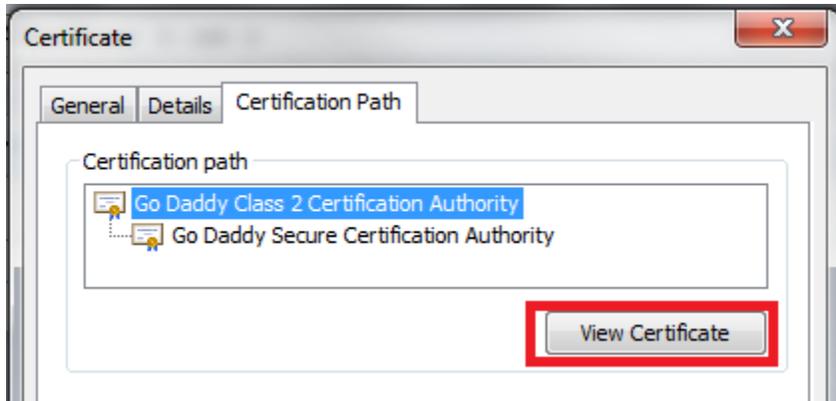
If this certificate had multiple intermediate certs, I would call this **inter1.cer**.



The intermediate certificate should now be exported (if there are multiple intermediate certificates in the chain, this will be done for each certificate):

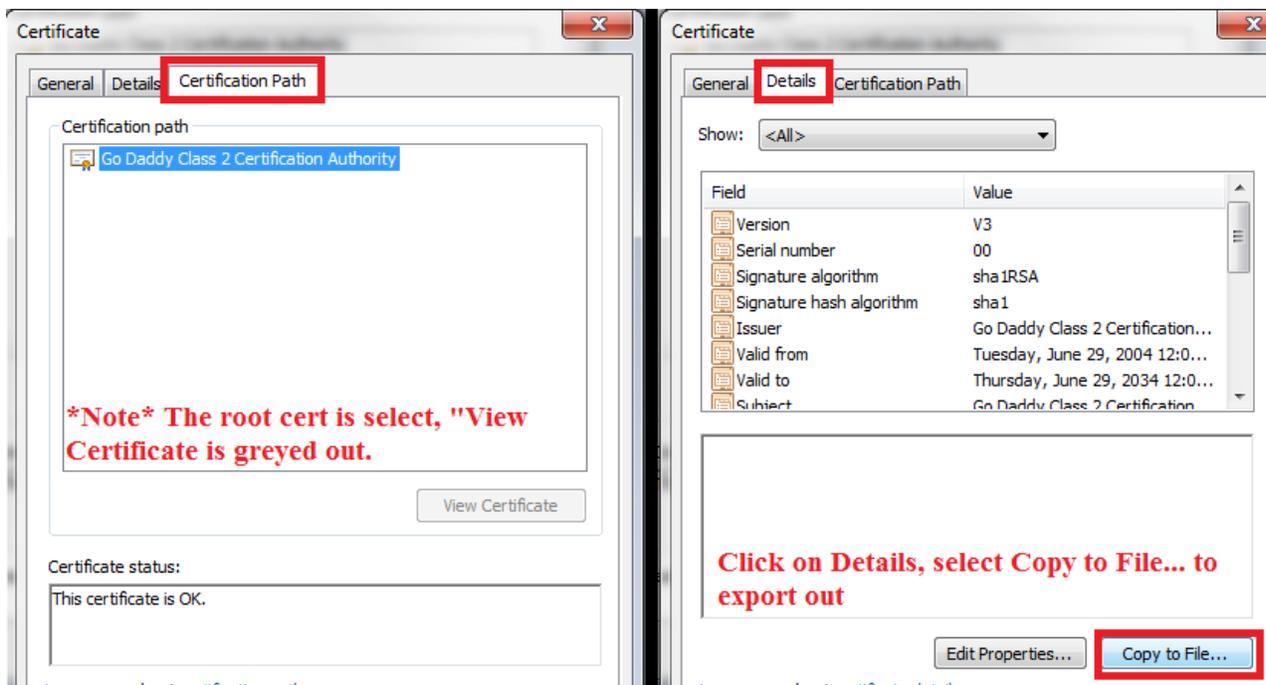


Finally, select the root certificate and press **View Certificate**

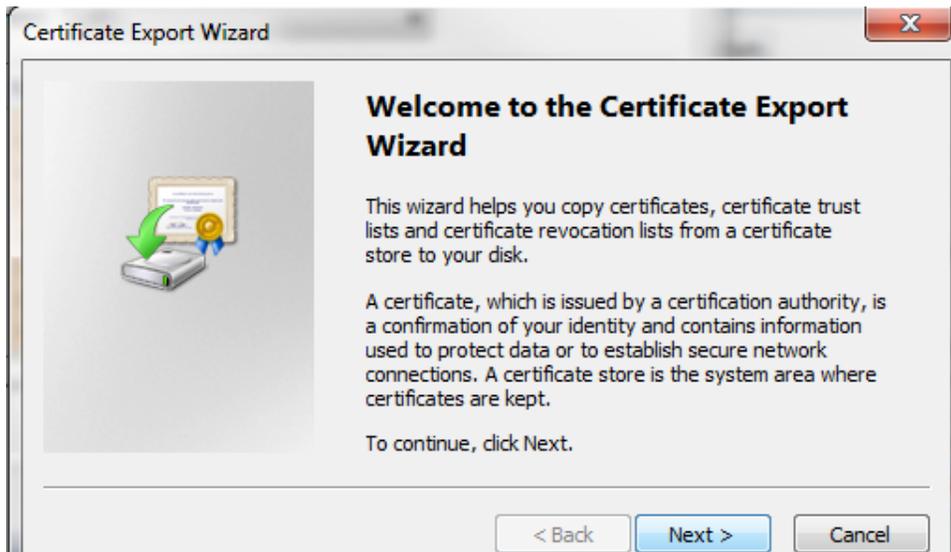


The root certificate should now be selected.

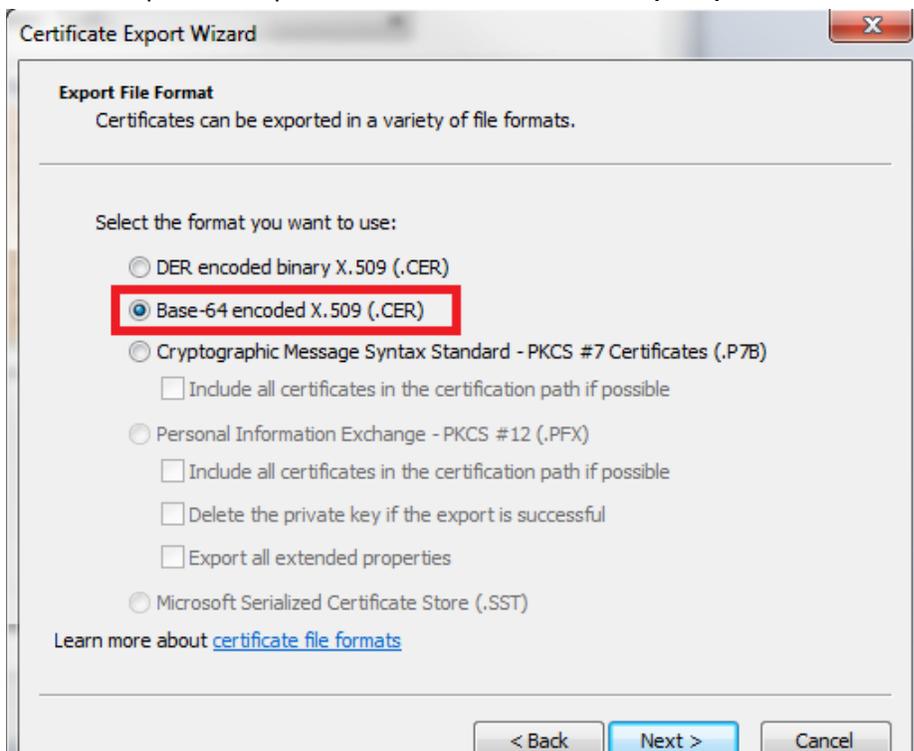
Navigate to the **Details** tab and select **Copy to File...**



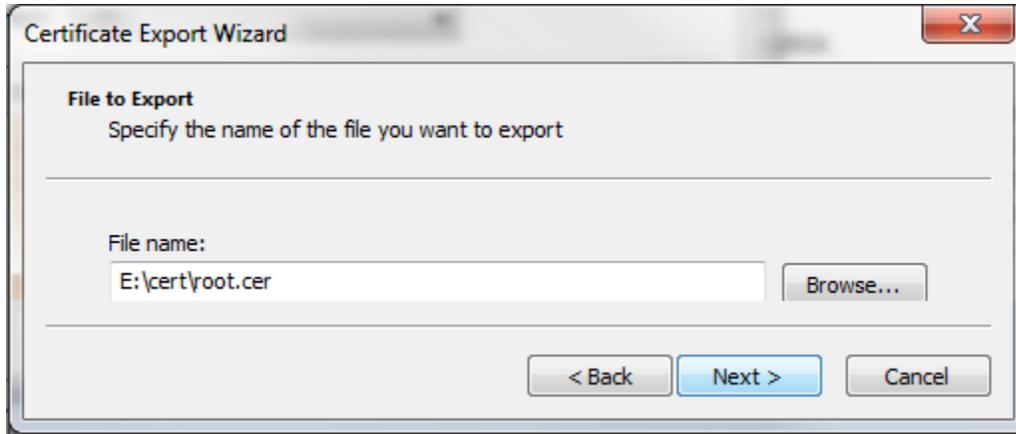
You will now be presented with the Certificate Export Wizard:



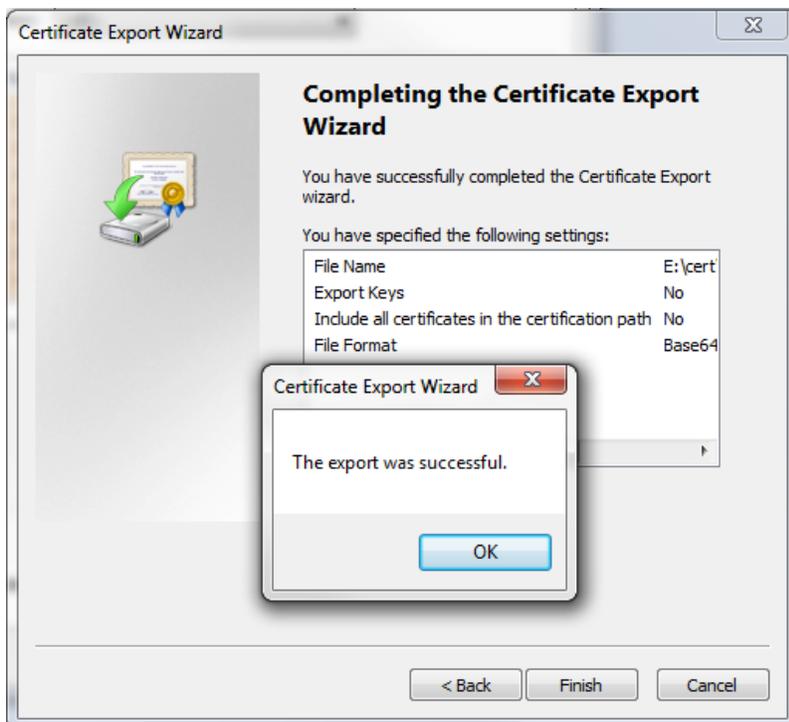
Select the option to export as **Base-64 encoded X.509 (.CER)**:

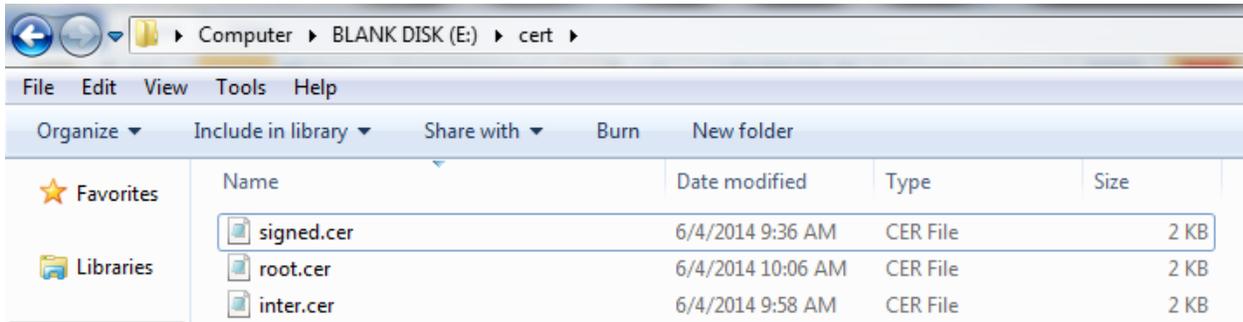


The cert is being named **root.cer**, because it is the root certificate.



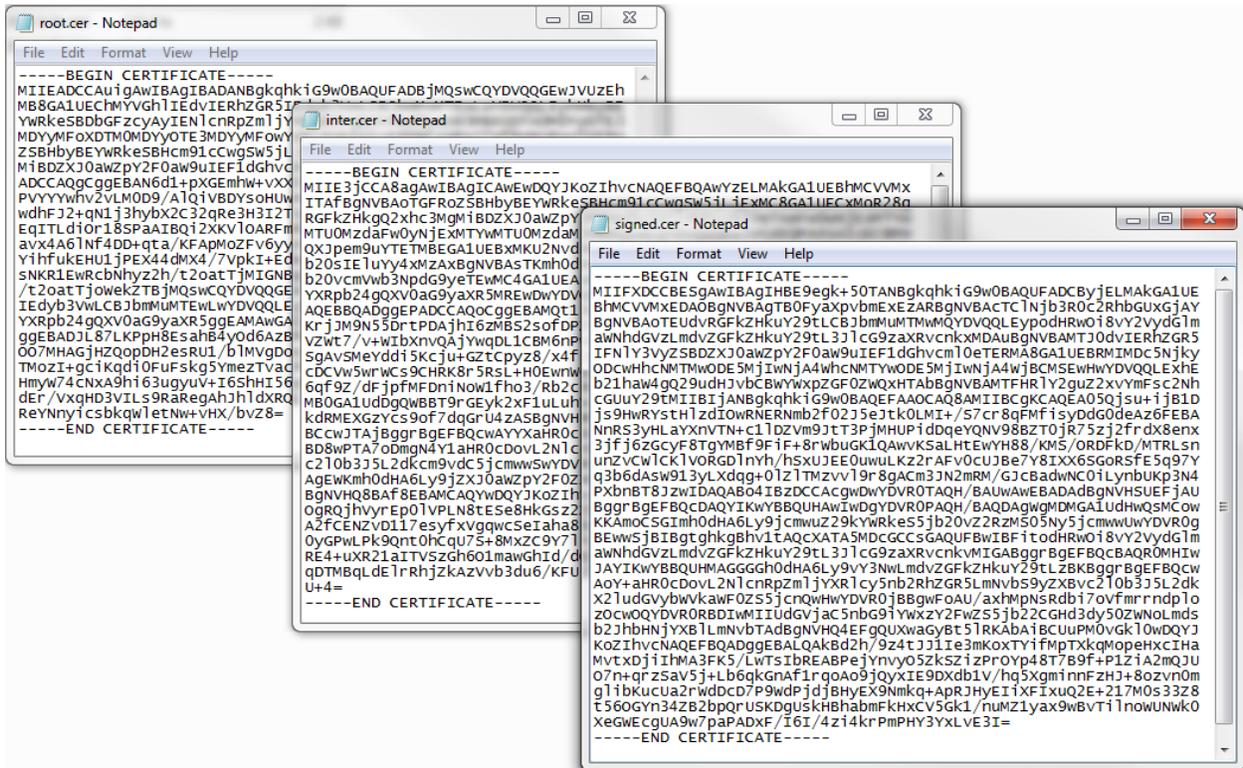
The root certificate should now be exported:



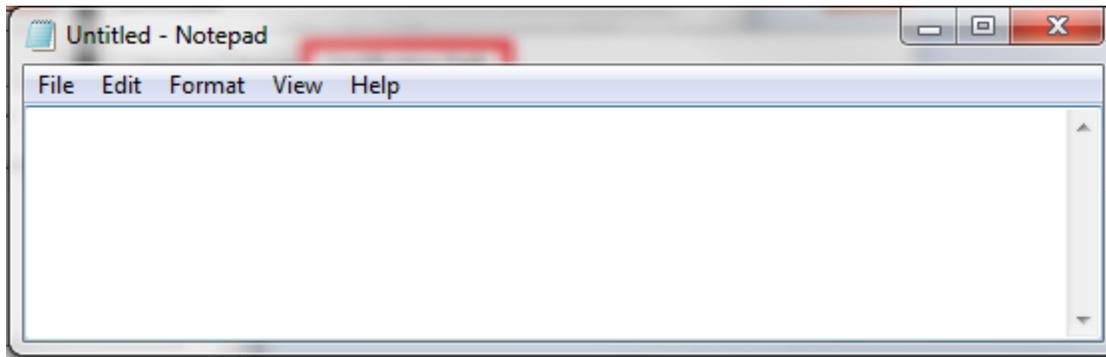


Now that we have all of the certificates in the certificate path outputted, we can chain them together into one file.

First, open each file in notepad

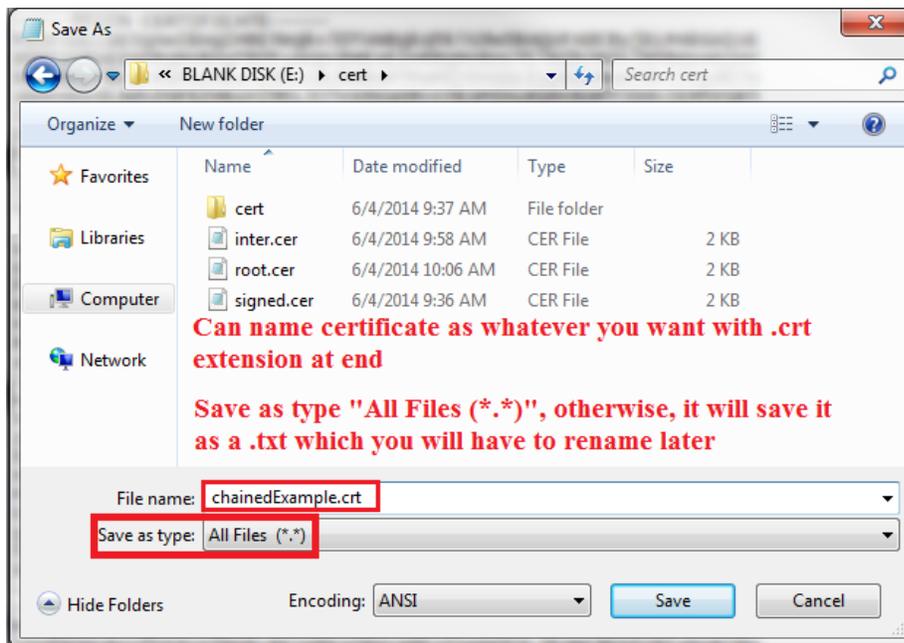


Then, open a blank notepad.

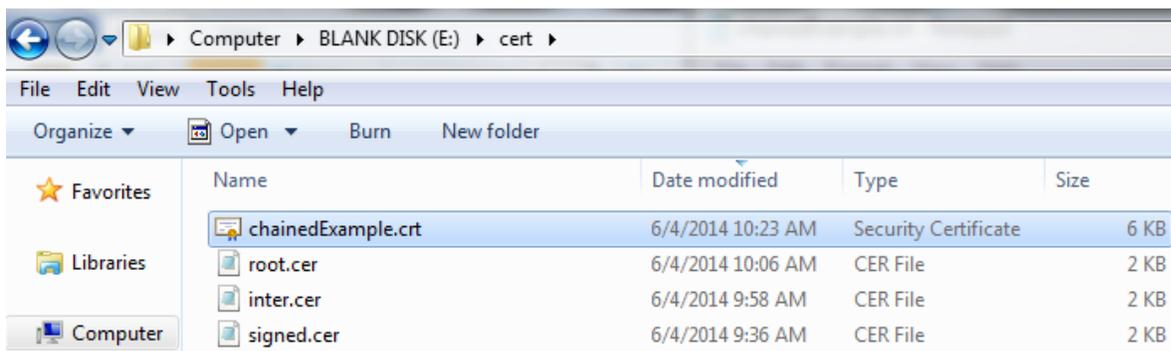


Copy/paste the exported certs in order (from top to bottom)

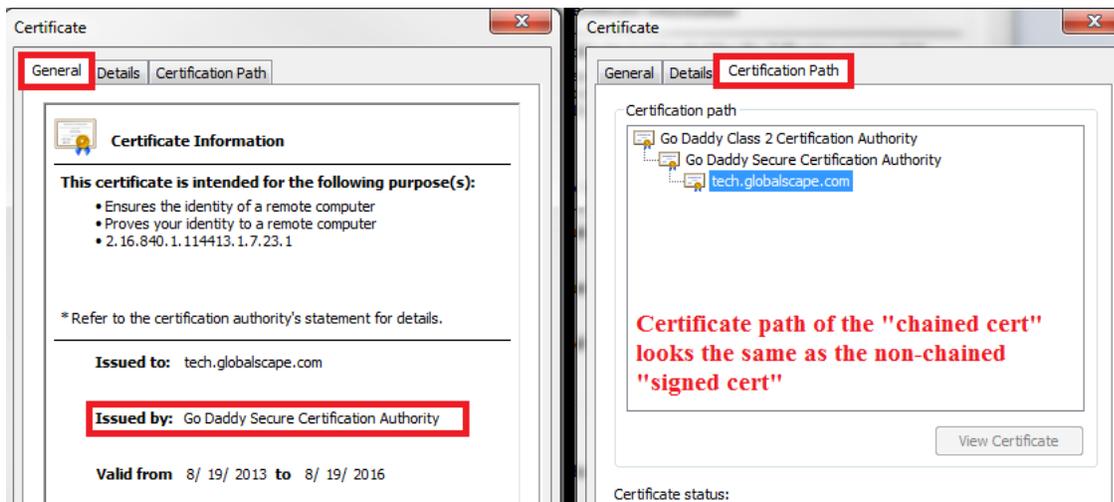
- 1) Signed (at the top)
- 2) Intermediate (s) [if you have multiple, paste them in order]
- 3) Root (at the bottom)



To verify the certificate has been chained properly, double-click to open it.



The chained certificate should appear the same as the signed certificate .



The major difference is that this “chained cert” physically contains each certificate file in the certification path.

When implementing into EFT, you should use this as the certificate.

Use the private key+passphrase that was generated during the certificate creation.

Alternatively, you can use the private key that was extracted from the .pfx file and saved as .key.

Or, you can use the .pfx file as the private key if it contains the private key.

If EFT is rejecting the .crt and .key due to mismatch, you can verify that they match each other by using SSLShopper’s certificate/key matcher: <https://www.sslshopper.com/certificate-key-matcher.html>

Try **removing** the new-lines between the ...

-----END CERTIFICATE -----

-----BEGIN CERTIFICATE -----

...segments, as this can sometimes cause an issue with the certificate due to hidden (non-displayable) characters that may have been introduced.