How to turn off the "Open File – Security Warning" Message
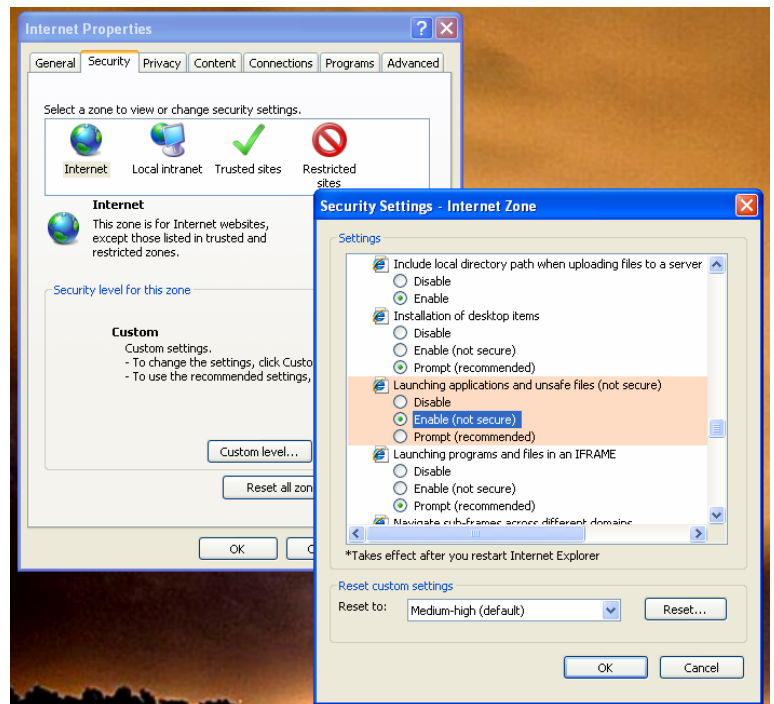
If you're annoyed by the "Open File – Security warning" message that can pop up on a Windows XP computer with Service Pack 2, it can be turned off. However, a caution is in order because turning it off changes the security settings on your computer. Here's how:

Microsoft's Knowledge Base article # KB889815 states, "This behavior is new in Windows XP SP2 because of the addition of the Attachment Execution Services (AES). Every program that is run by using the ShellExecute() API passes through AES. AES considers the … file to be from the Internet Zone."

Even though you're running an application on your computer instead of through your browser and the Internet, XP's Internet Security settings are in effect anyway.

1. Right-click on the Internet Explorer icon and select Properties.
2. Select the Security tab.
3. Select the Internet zone.
4. Select the Custom Level button.
5. Scroll down to the option about "Launching applications and unsafe files" and change it to Enable (not secure).
6. Click OK to save the setting.
7. Click OK again to apply the settings.

Note that this change has other consequences, particularly if you use the Internet where you're likely to see other messages appear to warn you that you're using "unsafe settings."