

The Connection

APRIL 2024

Grab Your Phone Before Your Shovel

There may be more than roots underground on your property. Utility lines could also be



buried there, possibly close to the surface and easily damaged by digging. That's why every digging job requires a call to 811 to have utility lines marked. Thanks in advance for your cooperation!

Contact Us

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Hoffman, MN 56339
Phone: 320-986-2013

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Email: rtaoffice@runestone.net

24/7 HelpDesk for Internet
Outages and Technical Support:
320-986-6655
helpdesk@runestone.net

Visit Us: www.runestone.net

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Runestone
Telecom Association



CRUISE THROUGH LIFE WITH FIBER INTERNET

How can we describe the free-wheeling experience of having Runestone Telecom's fiber Internet? It's a bit like the ideal bike ride down a smooth road on a sunny day. There's nothing to worry about and everything to explore.

Our fiber Internet provides super-fast speeds of up to 1 Gig at affordable prices. Plus, it's so incredibly reliable that you'll rarely hit a bump. Should it happen, our local team will respond quickly to get you cruising again.

**CALL 320-986-2013
TO DOUBLE YOUR SPEED FOR
AS LITTLE AS \$3 A MONTH!**

Service availability and Internet speed will depend on location. Certain restrictions apply. Contact us for details.



Megabit vs Megabyte

While the two terms look similar at first glance, they mean different things.

“Megabit” is a term used most often when talking about the speed of an Internet connection. Megabits per second, or Mbps, is a measurement of data transfer speed — 1 Mbps is one million bits per second. (A bit is the smallest measure of binary data.) Internet service providers usually list their Internet speeds in Mbps, such as 100 Mbps or 500 Mbps.

“Megabyte” is a measurement most often used to describe both hard drive space and memory storage capacity. For example, a USB thumb drive may store up to 500 MB of data. There are eight bits in a single byte.

So, yes, it does matter whether you see a lowercase “b” or a capital “B.” The lowercase “b” stands for bit or bits, and the capital B stands for byte or bytes.

For details on our Internet plans, visit www.runestone.net.

See TV Guide

You can always find the most up to date show listings on our website at www.runestone.net > Cable Television > Additional Services > TV Guide or scan this QR code to go directly to the TV Guide.

You may also opt to purchase a subscription directly from www.tvguidemagazine.com.



Should You Repair or Replace Your Device?

When damage or glitches happen, it can be tough to decide between device repair and replacement. Can the problem be successfully fixed, and if so, what will it cost? How do you know when it's time to buy a new phone, tablet, or laptop?

Before you make a decision, it's helpful to consider these factors:

How old is your device?

On average, a phone can perform well for at least three years, and a laptop can last at least four to five years. So, if you're having problems with a newer device, it's probably worth fixing, especially if it just needs a simple repair. Don't ignore cracks, dents, or other physical damage. These are typically less expensive repairs, and fixing them sooner helps prevent bigger problems later. If your device is nearing the end of its expected lifespan, you may want to replace it.

How much will the repair cost?

Here's a good rule to follow: If a repair costs more than half of what you paid for your device, it can make the most sense to get a new one, especially if it's more than a few years old and the damage is serious. Remember, you can often trade in your old phone and apply that credit toward a new one.

There are budget friendly repairs, however, that are well worth doing. For example, a phone battery replacement or a tune-up for your laptop can cost under \$100, making them smart ways to extend the life of your devices.

Is your device under warranty?

Before you start shopping for a new device, check and see whether your current one is still under warranty. You may be eligible for a free or low-cost repair or replacement. Keep in mind that all warranties come with exceptions, including water damage, cosmetic damage (like scratches), repairs by unauthorized providers, and normal wear and tear.

2024 FUSC Rate Change

FUSC will decrease from 34.6% to 32.8% effective 03-30-24.

Make Sure You Don't Fall for a Phone Scam



Phone scammers will do whatever it takes to convince you to send them money or provide the personal information they need to commit identity theft. In some scams, they act friendly and helpful. In others, they threaten or try to scare you.

While these scams come in many forms, they tend to share certain characteristics. The Federal Trade Commission published five things to keep in mind whenever you get an unwanted or suspicious call:

1. There is no prize.

The caller might say you were “selected” for an offer or that you’ve won a lottery. But if you have to pay to get the prize, it’s not a prize.

2. You won't be arrested.

Scammers might pretend to be law enforcement or a federal agency. They might say you’ll be arrested, fined, or deported if you don’t pay taxes or some other debt right away. The goal is to scare you into paying. However, real law enforcement and federal agencies won’t call and threaten you.

3. You don't need to decide now.

Most honest businesses will give you time to think their offer over and get written information about it before you commit. Take your time. Don’t get pressured into making a decision on the spot.

4. Only scammers demand you pay certain ways.

Scammers will often insist you pay in a way that makes it hard to get your money back, such as by wire transfer, gift card, cryptocurrency, or payment app.

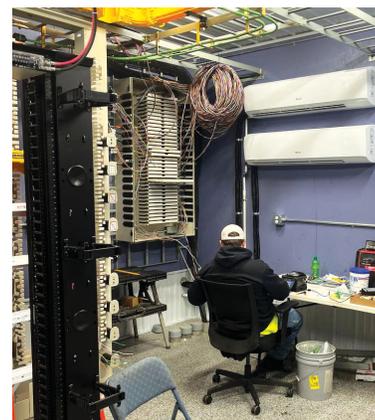
5. Government agencies won't call to confirm your sensitive information.

No government agency is going to call you out of the blue and ask for sensitive information like your Social Security number. The caller is lying if they claim to be with the Social Security Administration, IRS, or other well-known agency.

The best thing you can do to protect yourself from phone scams is to not answer calls from numbers you don’t recognize. If you do answer and hear some of the red flags listed above, just hang up. It’s also important to note that illegitimate companies and scam artists do not respect the boundaries of the National Do Not Call Registry.

Preparing to Connect Herman Area to Fiber

Our techs have been spending a lot of time splicing fibers in Runestone’s Central Office in Herman so we can start connecting the Herman area to our fiber network. We’re excited to bring blazing-fast fiber Internet to the community!



Try eBill and AutoPay

Still mailing a check to pay your Runestone Telecom bill? Switch to eBill for more security, lower costs, and less time required. For an even faster option, choose AutoPay and we’ll automatically deduct your bill amount on the 20th of the month from the account you designate.

Visit www.runestone.net to sign up. Call 320-986-2013 if you need help.

Cable TV Updates

- Channel 46 has a new name, Hallmark Mystery.
- Effective April 1, 2024, ThisTV (Channel 18.4) will be leaving our lineup. There’s no replacement planned at this time. We’ll update you with any other changes to our cable channels.

Streaming Services are Producing More Original Content

One of the key trends shaping the video streaming industry is the rise of original content. Major services —including Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Hulu, Disney+, and Max —are investing more heavily in producing high-quality original series and movies.

Why is this happening? In the battle for viewership dominance, original content has emerged as a key differentiator among these platforms.

Netflix paved the way for this development in 2011, when it began to negotiate the production of original content, starting with the series *House of Cards*. The term "binge-watching" was added to our vocabulary when *House of Cards* launched in 2013, and Netflix started marketing the idea of watching episode after episode.

For the best experience while streaming series and movies, make sure your Internet connection has sufficient speeds. For details on our Internet plans, call 320-986-2013.

New Members

- Lowry**
Lowry Transfer Inc..... 320-283-5308
- Barrett**
Green Pastures LLC..... 320-528-2598
- Dumont**
Traverse County Highway
Department Shop..... 320-563-8443
- Elbow Lake**
Rein, Richard..... 218-685-4229

Enjoy Fewer Hassles and More Features With Managed WiFi

Managed WiFi is a system that combines equipment and service to enhance your WiFi experience. Rather than trying to fend for yourself with network setup and troubleshooting, subscribing to Managed WiFi makes everything easier.

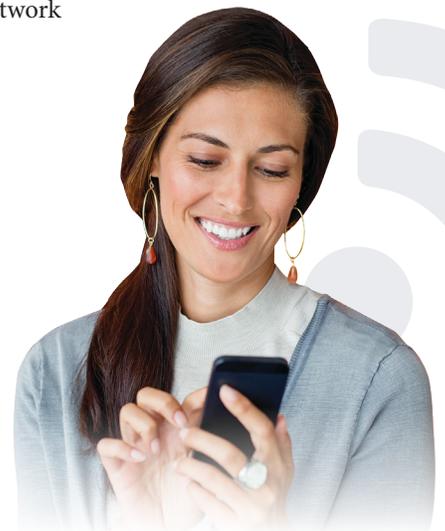
First of all, Managed WiFi takes the tough stuff off your plate. You don't have to research which router to get or deal with the hassles of resolving issues that may come up. When you sign up for Managed WiFi, our team will handle these tasks for you:

- Installation of a next-generation router with powerful WiFi 6
- Selection of the best router location in your home for optimal coverage and signal strength from room to room
- Setup of your WiFi security password to avoid others using your WiFi network without your permission
- Connection of your devices — such as laptops, tablets, phones, and printer — to the WiFi network
- Ongoing maintenance including router software upgrades for optimal performance
- Remote support should a WiFi issue arise
- Repair or replacement of our router when needed

You'll also gain valuable features with the handy app that comes with Managed WiFi. It gives you the power to do the following (and more) from your smartphone or tablet:

- Manage network performance including network password and name
- See which devices are connected to your network
- Enable, disable, and pause devices
- Check your network speed
- Set and adjust parental controls
- Set and adjust network security settings
- Create and manage guest networks
- Get alerts about network performance and security

If you'd like fewer WiFi hassles and more WiFi features, you can lease a remotely managed WiFi router from us for \$3.95 a month. Call 320-986-2013 for details.



Affordable Connectivity Program Ends

The FCC has confirmed that April 2024 will be the last fully funded month for ACP. Customers who are affected by this will receive a letter with further explanation.