


Connections

JULY 2026

Happy 250th, USA!

This year's July 4th celebrations will commemorate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. This historic milestone honors our nation's past and encourages us to consider the future we want to create. Happy Independence Day!



Office Closure
Friday, July 3rd for Independence Day

Contact Us

100 Runestone Drive / PO Box 336
Hoffman, MN 56339
Phone: 320-986-2013

Office Hours: M-F 8 am to 4:30 pm

Email: rtaoffice@runestone.com

24/7 HelpDesk for Internet Outages and Technical Support:
320-986-6655

technicalsupport@runestone.net

Visit Us: www.runestone.net

Find Us:    

Review Us on Google

Please let others know about your experience as a Runestone Telecom customer. Scan this code and leave a review on Google.



OUR 2026 ANNUAL MEETING PROMISES TO BE A WINNER!

SAVE THE DATE OF JULY 8TH

Runestone Telecom's 76th Annual Meeting is set for **Wednesday, July 8th** at West Central Area High School in Barrett. **Registration opens at 5:30 pm, and the meeting begins at 7 pm.**

PLAY BINGO FOR CASH

Bingo kicks off at 6:00 pm, and you won't want to miss this opportunity to go home with extra money in your pocket. Plus, we'll be giving away Twins baseball tickets, Runestone swag, and other prizes to lucky winners throughout the evening.

TREAT YOURSELF

Stick around after the meeting to enjoy refreshments served by the WCA Trap Shooting Team.

ANNUAL REPORT

The 2026 Annual Report will be available to view online at www.runestone.net. If you would like a printed copy, you can pick one up at our office, or call us at 320-986-2013 to have one mailed to you.

All of our cooperative members are winners, and we look forward to seeing you at the Annual Meeting!

Have Fun in the Sun

Runestone Telecom can't wait for all of these summer events:

76th Annual Meeting

July 8th at West Central Area School in Barrett, MN

Registration - 5:30pm

Bingo - 6pm

Meeting - 7pm

Grant County Fair

July 16th-19th

Traverse County Family Fun Night

July 27th

Traverse County Fair

August 27th-30th

Grant County Get Together

September TBA

Watch for us in the parades too!



When you're planning a project that involves digging, call 811 or visit 811beforeyoudig.com. A locator will come out and mark underground utilities so you can avoid them safely — at no cost to you. You might even spot one of our local Runestone Telecom technicians helping with the process. Calling is a simple step that protects your project, your property, and your community.

We Prioritize Service Restoration

Construction season occasionally brings unexpected challenges, and from time to time, underground fiber optic cables can be accidentally damaged. When an outage is reported, our Network Technicians respond quickly and make service restoration a top priority.



Runestone Telecom understands how important your phone and Internet services are to daily life, and we always work as efficiently and safely as possible to restore service for affected customers. We sincerely apologize for any interruption you may have experienced and appreciate your patience and understanding when these situations occur.

You Can't Beat a Wheaton Meet & Greet

It was a fun evening on June 3rd as we got to visit with residents in our Wheaton service area. Thank you to everyone who came out to picnic with us and to our staff who helped host! We also want to thank Willy's Super Valu for taking care of us with the meal, Culligan for making sure we didn't go thirsty, and the City of Wheaton for welcoming us to your community!





Road Ditch Burning Can Become a \$50,000 Mistake

Please use extreme caution when burning road ditches, corn stalks, grass, or other debris near utility equipment.

Fiber optic pedestals located along roadsides are a critical part of our network infrastructure. Many of these pedestals contain ring fiber — major fiber lines that carry network traffic for large portions of our service area. If one of these lines is damaged by fire, the outage can affect many customers, businesses, schools, cellular towers, emergency communications, and essential services.

When fiber equipment burns, repairs are not simple or inexpensive. Emergency restoration work can cost **\$5,000 or more per hour** depending on the severity of the damage, location, manpower, and equipment required. In major incidents, repair costs can quickly climb to **\$50,000 or more** in time, labor, materials, and emergency response efforts.

If our technicians receive a call late at night, they respond immediately and will work overtime through the night and into the next day until repairs are completed and service is restored to customers. In addition to the significant repair expense, outages involving major fiber routes may take days to fully restore depending on the extent of the damage.

Any damage caused by ditch burning or negligent fire activity will be billed to the responsible party for all repair costs, including labor, materials, equipment, and overtime service calls.

What may start as a small roadside burn can escalate rapidly due to dry conditions and wind. Please remain aware of nearby utility equipment and burn responsibly.



Handy Reminders

- Conveniently pay your bill with eBill and AutoPay.
- Pay your bill by the 20th of the month to avoid late fees and disconnection. Please don't use staples to attach your checks.

New Members

Cyrus

Ettesvold, Jere..... 320-795-2281

Elbow Lake

Naughter, John
& Dorothy..... 218-685-5492

Lowry

Orrock, Les & Kathy... 320-283-6149
Stensrud, Eric..... 320-283-2000

Wendell

Maahs, Sherry 218-458-2470

Wheaton

City of Wheaton
Swimming Pool..... 320-563-0649

FUSC Update

Effective July 1st, 2026, the Federal Universal Service Charge (FUSC) on your bill will increase from 37.0% to 38.8%.

Fiber vs. 5G Home Internet: What's the Difference?

5G home Internet has become a popular option in some areas, but it's important to understand how it differs from a fiber optic connection.

1. Wireless signals can be less consistent.

5G home Internet relies on radio signals traveling through the air. Factors such as distance from the tower, network congestion, weather conditions, and physical obstructions can affect performance. Fiber uses dedicated underground cables that deliver a more stable connection.

2. Speeds may vary throughout the day.

Because 5G networks are shared among many users, speeds can fluctuate during busy periods when more people are online. Fiber Internet provides consistent speeds regardless of how many neighbors are using the network.

3. Some wireless plans may include network management or speed limitations.

Depending on the provider and plan, heavy users may experience reduced speeds during periods of congestion or after reaching certain usage thresholds. This can be frustrating for households that stream, game, work from home, or have multiple connected devices. Fiber Internet plans are not affected by cellular network congestion and deliver consistent performance month after month.

4. Upload speeds are often much slower.

Many 5G services focus on download speeds but offer significantly slower upload speeds. Fiber provides symmetrical speeds, meaning uploads are just as fast as downloads — ideal for video calls, gaming, cloud backups, remote work, and sharing large files.

5. Performance depends on tower location.

The farther your home is from a cellular tower, the weaker the signal may become. Trees, buildings, and terrain can also impact wireless performance. Fiber connections are not affected by these factors.

6. Fiber is built for long-term reliability.

Fiber optic Internet delivers data through strands of glass using light. It offers exceptional speed, reliability, and capacity to handle today's connected homes and tomorrow's technology.

The Bottom Line

5G home Internet may work well for some households, but if fiber is available, it remains the gold standard for speed, reliability, and overall performance.

Questions about fiber Internet service? Contact Runestone Telecom at 320-986-2013.