

**September
2017**

Issue No. 3

How Much Bandwidth Do You Need?

If you haven't upgraded your internet speed in a while, back-to-school is the perfect time to consider what bandwidth you really need. Students are using the internet for research, e-learning, and homework assignments more than ever before. Don't let your student fall behind.

When choosing the right internet plan, it is crucial to take into consideration the number of internet-connected devices in your household. People often perceive a slow connection as poor service, when in reality they have simply overloaded their connection. The more people and devices you have using your internet connection, the more bandwidth you will need. Count the number of devices in your home that connect to the internet and you will probably be surprised. Be sure to count desktop computers, laptops, iPads, iPods, tablets, gaming systems, smart TVs, smart phones and any other streaming media devices that might connect to your wireless network. After taking inventory, most people are surprised to learn that they may have anywhere from 6 to 12 different devices sharing the same internet connection. Speeds of 20Mbps and more would be suggested for such households. Yet, many have never upgraded their internet plan. If this is the case with your household, it's time to upgrade.

The way people use the internet has also changed significantly over the years. It is important to realize that applications that stream video (like Netflix and Skype), stream music (like Pandora and Spotify), and online gaming systems (like Xbox and Playstation) require more bandwidth than casual surfing. It is also important to note that many devices may be using bandwidth even when you are not using them. Some examples would be smartphones, tablets, software applications, and anti-virus programs that automatically update or constantly scan for updates, emails, weather, and news.

If you are a current Poka Lambro internet subscriber, now is the perfect time to review your household's internet needs and make sure you haven't outgrown your plan. Give us a call today at 806-924-7234 to learn about our three month speed upgrade for no additional charge.

Not an internet subscriber? Sign-up for service before September 30th and mention the code word **"School"** to receive a \$20 bill-credit.

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Build Broadband With Us

Every day NTCA members work hard to deliver for the country's rural communities. Their steadfast commitment to serving the communities they call home makes them rural America's trusted solution providers. These dedicated telecom providers ensure rural Americans have access to affordable, reliable, and robust broadband services to connect their homes, businesses, and communities to the rest of America and the world.

Did you know that rural telecom providers...

- contribute billions of dollars to the U.S. economy?
- serve 37% of the U.S. landmass in 45 states?
- support approximately 70,000 rural and urban jobs?
- support over \$100 billion in e-commerce a year?

While advancements have been made in technology and innovation, many challenges still exist for these small, community-based, rural telecom providers. They are met with challenges such as limited budgets and high operating expenses in serving sparsely populated areas over great distances. NTCA members are finding solutions to build upon what has worked to date, while incorporating innovative ways to overcome the continuous challenges of operating in rural areas and offer advanced communications services at affordable rates.

Visit www.buildbroadbandwithus.com to learn more and become an advocate to help spread awareness of the critical need for rural broadband infrastructure.

**Statistics based on the report, "The Economic Impact of Rural Broadband," released by the Hudson Institute and commissioned by the Foundation for Rural Service.



Fiber Network Updates

We remain committed to upgrading our infrastructure and network in order to deploy a first rate fiber optic voice and data network to meet the evolving needs of our customers. Once fiber has been installed in an area, customers located there will need to upgrade to the new fiber facilities to experience the added benefits. There is no cost to the customer to transition to fiber facilities. However, we do need to enter the home or business to install a small piece of equipment.

Ausborne: Main fiber is now being installed and fiber-splicing will start in the coming weeks.

Hatch: Fiber-splicing has been completed. Customer conversions are underway.

Loop: The northwest portion of the Loop exchange has been completed. If you are located in this area and have not yet been upgraded to the new fiber facilities, please contact our office to schedule a time for the upgrade.

Patricia: Fiber-splicing has been completed in Sparenburg. Customer conversions are underway.

Wheatley: The Wheatley exchange has been completed. If you are located in this area and have not yet been upgraded to the new fiber facilities, please contact our office to schedule a time for the upgrade.

If you are unsure whether you are in an area that has been upgraded, or need to schedule an appointment, please call us at 806-924-7234 or 800-422-2387.

Tech Tip

Have you tried restarting your router yet? It is probably the first question you will be asked if you call in having issues with your internet. It is the first step in troubleshooting and can solve a wide variety of issues. It is as simple as unplugging the router, waiting 20 seconds, and plugging it back in. Give the device a couple of minutes to turn back on and check to see if your issue is resolved.

Many of these issues can be avoided altogether if you restart your router on a regular basis. Much like computers, phones, and tablets, routers need to be power-cycled occasionally to refresh and maximize their performance. So, next time you are having an issue, save yourself a few minutes and give it a try before you give us a call.

Robocalls: What You Need to Know

Robocalls are phone calls that use an auto-dialer to deliver a pre-recorded message. Using this tactic, businesses, organizations, and even scammers can make thousands of anonymous phone calls a day. Many robocallers illegally disguise, or “spoof,” their Caller ID information or violate other rules. Here is what you need to know.

While many robocalls are illegal, medical appointment confirmations, school closing calls, political/charitable calls, public service announcements, and emergency announcements are permitted. Banks and telephone companies are allowed to use robocalling in some situations as well, provided they make the calls themselves. Text messages are protected by the same Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rules as phone calls. The rules vary for landline and mobile phone calls.

Advocates are working to mitigate the problem. For example, NTCA–The Rural Broadband Association and its members are working to provide information to the FCC Robocall Strike Force to further develop and implement solutions to detect, assess, and stop unwanted calls from reaching customers. Phone carriers may be able to block certain numbers, although robocallers frequently change or “spoof” their number. There are also new technologies, like applications for your cell phone, that allow you to control which calls ring.

Never respond to a robocall. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) recommends that if you receive a robocall, the best thing to do is simply hang up. Do not press any number to speak to a live operator or to unsubscribe from the list, as this will tell the robocaller that it has reached a live number. It might be best to let calls from unknown numbers go to voicemail. Robocallers are unlikely to leave a message; while family, friends, and other known callers will.

Don't give out personal information. If you receive an unsolicited call from any company, including one you know or do business with, tell them that you will not give them personal information until you verify the call is legitimate. Then, call the phone number you know, that is listed in the phone book, or that you get from the company's official website to confirm the caller's identity.

The FTC encourages consumers to register your phones on the National Do Not Call Registry and report unwanted calls to www.donotcall.gov or 1-888-382-1222. Complaints may also be filed with the FCC online or 1-888-CALL-FCC. More information can be found at ntca.org/robocalls and fcc.gov/consumers/guides.

Poka Lambro offers Terminating Call Manager for only \$3 a month!

With Terminating Call Manager from Poka Lambro you can screen out calls from telemarketers, polling services, auto-dialers, and other nuisance callers. Through your phone or web portal you have the ability to pre-select numbers to block, and add new callers to your block list by simply dialing a code after the call. The feature will create an “Allowed Caller List” and a “Blocked Caller List”. You can easily add or remove numbers from either list anytime. Auto dialers, when reaching the recording, will time out and the call will not go through to you. Callers whose numbers have been blocked will hear a recording notifying them that “the number they have reached does not accept calls from their number.” The “Do Not Disturb” feature allows you to block all calls for a selected time period giving you peace and privacy. Call us today at 806-924-7234 or 800-422-2387 to learn more about Terminating Call Manager.

New Connects

Aten

Aaron Duboise..... (806) 439-6629

Fletcher-Carter

Armando E Valenzuela..... (806) 327-5417

Gail

Carissa Buchanan..... (806) 756-4300

Jeffery Wyszynski..... (806) 759-4499

Loop

Steve Adkins..... (806) 487-1643

James K Hester..... (806) 487-6746

New Home

Darwin Howard..... (806) 924-7538

Justin Parker..... (806) 924-7406

Kary Laws (806) 924-7288

Brady Webb..... (806) 924-7795

O'Donnell

Louie Birdwell..... (806) 428-3802

Augustine Cantu..... (806) 428-3284

Derek Garces..... (806) 428-3254

Robi Webb..... (806) 428-3649



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Published Quarterly by

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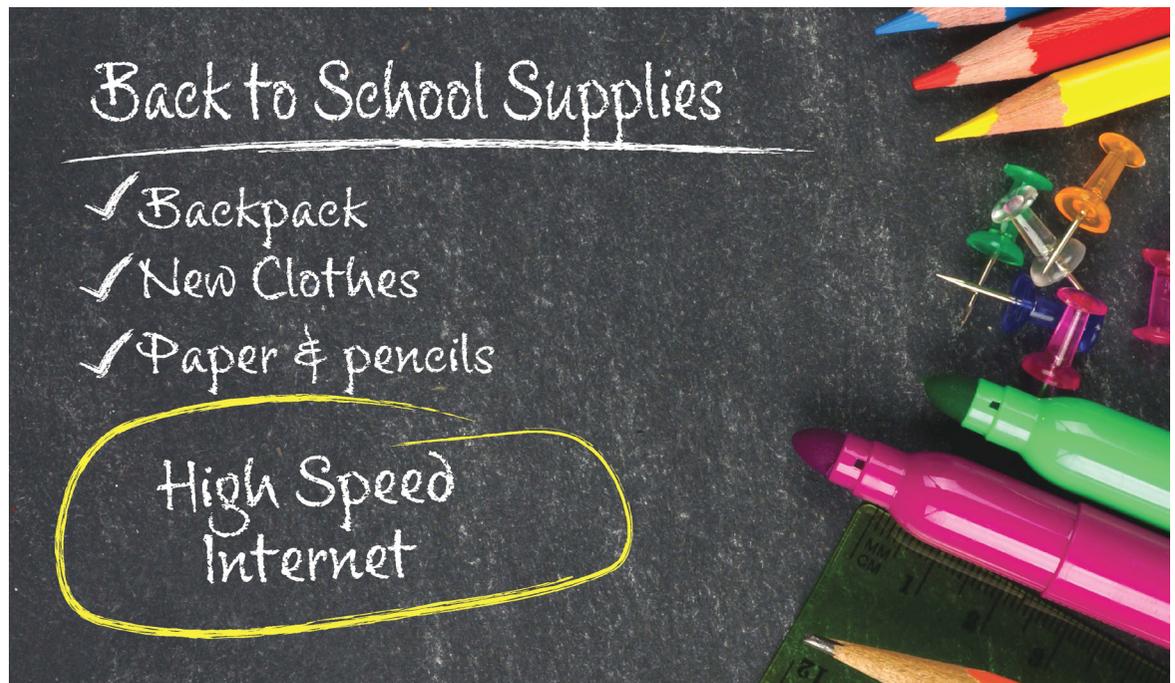
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Keeping Students Safe Online



Going back to school means new or increased computer usage for many students. Make sure that your children know how to keep themselves, and your family's information, protected online. Talk to them about predators, bullies, hackers, scammers, and other threats they could encounter online. Here are a few talking points.

- Never give out personal information (address, phone number, parents' work address and number, name of your school, etc.) without a parents' permission.
- Never give out your passwords to anyone other than your parents, even your best friends.
- Always check with your parents before buying or ordering anything online.
- Never give out credit card information or respond to offers about winning free things without first discussing it with your parents.
- Always ask permission before downloading games, movies, or other programs.
- Always check with your parents before downloading or installing software or doing anything that could possibly hurt your computer or mobile device or jeopardize your family's privacy.