

INTERNET USE

To fulfill its mission of providing public access to information of all types in a wide range of formats, the New Ulm Public Library provides access to Internet resources. The Internet offers access to many valuable local, national, and international sources of information. However, some information found on the Internet may be inaccurate, incomplete, dated, or offensive to some individuals. A good information consumer must evaluate the accuracy and appropriateness of all information.

1. CHOOSING AND EVALUATING SOURCES

The Internet is a series of communication linkages leading to a highly diverse array of information content. Library patrons use it at their own risk. In choosing sources to link to from its home pages, the Library follows its materials selection guidelines. Beyond this, the Library is not responsible for the content of the Internet, changes in content of the sources to which the Library pages link, or for the content of sources accessed through secondary links.

2. ACCESS BY MINORS

Parents or legal guardians must assume responsibility for deciding which library resources are appropriate for their own children. Parents or legal guardians should guide their children in use of the Internet and inform them about materials they should not use. While the Library affirms and acknowledges the rights and responsibilities of parents and guardians to monitor and determine their children's access to Library materials and resources, including those available through the Internet, the Library has taken certain measures designed to assist in the safe and effective use of these resources by all minors, including providing Internet filtering and information on safe and effective Internet use.

To address the issue of the safety and security of minors who use electronic mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communications, and to warn them against making unauthorized disclosures about their Internet use and personal identification information, the Library urges minors to keep in mind the following safety guidelines:

- Never give out identifying information such as home address, school name, or telephone number.
- Let parents or guardians decide whether personal information such as age, marital status, or financial information should be revealed.
- Never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone via the computer without parents' or guardians' approval.
- Never respond to messages that are suggestive, obscene, threatening, or make one uncomfortable.

- Have parents or guardians report an incident to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children at 1-800-843-5678 if one becomes aware of the transmission of child pornography.
- Remember that people online may not be who they say they are.
- Remember that everything one reads may not be true.

To address the issue of unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking," and other unlawful activities, minors are also advised that use of the Library's computers for hacking or any other unlawful activity is strictly prohibited.

3. INTERNET WORKSTATION POLICIES

The Library promotes responsible use of the Internet and of its computer workstations by the following:

1. Each library patron is entitled to a specified amount of time at a Library Internet workstation each day.
2. Behavior that will interfere with another person's concentration when using computer workstations is prohibited. Such behaviors include, but are not limited to: loudly conversing with others, using cell phones inappropriately, switching computers frequently, playing in the computer area, and climbing or standing on furniture.
3. Workstation use is limited to one person per workstation except in special circumstances.
4. Library staff has the right to restrict the length of time any individual may use Internet workstations, particularly when others are waiting to use them.
5. Juveniles ages 12 and under should use Children's Room Internet workstations. Parents are responsible for directing and guiding their children's use of the Internet.

4. ACCEPTABLE USES OF INTERNET WORKSTATIONS

The following is a list of acceptable uses:

1. Research using the web and Internet.
2. Accessing the Library (aka TdS) materials catalog.
3. Doing word processing, spreadsheets and presentations.
4. Accessing email via web-based services.

Our workstations have had their operating systems secured to reduce the need for technical support which inevitably comes from providing public access to PCs. Software installed on our machines includes an Internet browser, word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation software.

Our Internet workstations have the following limitations:

1. Documents cannot be saved to the PCs' hard drive.

2. Due to the nature of the Internet, services apart from those for which our machines are designed may be available; e.g., chat, playing games, streaming video and audio, and so on. These are not library supported or controlled.
4. Staff assistance for the public in the use of Internet workstations is necessarily limited. We are not experts in the use of every piece of software on our machines. Neither do we know all of the software used across the Internet; e.g., the many Java applets in use on websites. As staff we will help to the best of our abilities, but responsibility for using and learning how to use Internet workstations ultimately rests with the user.

5. UNACCEPTABLE USES OF INTERNET WORKSTATIONS

The following is a list of unacceptable uses:

1. Viewing material that violates federal, state, or local laws or regulations, including those regarding accessing, viewing, printing, and distributing obscenity or child pornography.
2. Sending, receiving, or displaying text or graphics which contain extremes of sex or violence that are an end to themselves.
3. Using computers to gain access to the Library's network or computer systems or to any other restricted network or computer system.
4. Using computer accounts, access codes, or network identification numbers without authorized permission.
5. Violating copyright laws or licensing agreements pertaining to software, files, and other resources obtained electronically.
6. Violating another user's privacy.
7. Attempting to alter software configurations or to cause degradation of system performance.
8. Engaging in any activity which is deliberately and maliciously offensive, libelous, or slanderous.
9. Installing or downloading any software.
10. Disrupting or interfering with network users or services. Such interference or disruption includes, but is not limited to: distribution of unsolicited advertising, harassment of others, propagation of computer worms or viruses, randomly initiating interactive electronic communications, and overuse of interactive network utilities.
11. Tampering with, destroying, or damaging equipment, software, or data belonging to the Library.

6. FILTERING

By default New Ulm Public Library filters all Internet workstations. Filtering may be disabled for adults upon request.

7. PRINTING

Printer copies from public computers are available at a nominal fee per page.

8. PRIVACY OF INFORMATION

We recommend against entering private or personal information on any public Internet workstation. This includes entering such things as logins and passwords for bank accounts, stock brokerage accounts, commercial vendor accounts, and the like. We do not, and cannot, guarantee the privacy of any such information entered on a public workstation. Our machines are meant to be used for research purposes and not as means of conducting personal or corporate business. The USA Patriot Act (2001) also affects the privacy of library records.

9. WIRELESS INTERNET ACCESS

1. New Ulm Public Library offers wireless Internet access to library users. However, be advised that wireless service is not considered a "mission critical" library service. Our limited technical support time will always be focused first on our online system and second on public Internet access through our library workstations. We cannot guarantee wireless service will always be available when the library is open. Please inform us if you believe the service is down. Our policies for public Internet workstations apply to wireless users, as well.
2. The Library does not provide support or advice in getting your personal laptop enabled for wireless service. Please contact your service provider if you need help.
3. The New Ulm Public Library provides wireless Internet access to library users. This wireless access is not filtered, and it is not secure.
4. Entering private or personal information on any public Internet workstation or wireless network is not recommended. This includes entering such things as logins and passwords for bank accounts, stock brokerage accounts, commercial vendor accounts, and the like. We do not, and cannot, guarantee the privacy of any such information entered on a public workstation or a wireless connection. Our Internet access is meant to be used for research purposes and not as means of conducting personal or corporate business.
5. Printer access when connected to our wireless network is not available.

10. ENFORCEMENT OF POLICIES

The Library Director and his/her designated staff are authorized to interpret and enforce these policies in accordance with applicable law and to ensure appropriate behavior of all persons in the Library facilities. Persons found to be violating these rules will be asked to discontinue that activity. If they continue, they may be asked to leave the library facility. If they refuse, police assistance may be sought by Library staff.

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