

RAINS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY PUBLIC COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE POLICY

The Rains County Public Library now offers public access computers connected to the Internet in order to enhance services available to county residents.

There is much information available on the World Wide Web that will fill the needs of those seeking current information for education and research purposes. However, Internet resources are offered by a worldwide, highly diverse group of institutions, businesses, and individuals.

Much material is personally, professionally, and culturally enriching, and educational in nature. Some materials, unfortunately, may be offensive, defamatory, controversial, inaccurate, out-of-date and/or illegal. The Library does not monitor and has no control over the information accessed through the Internet and cannot be held responsible for its content.

Web documents change rapidly and unpredictably. Citizens must use the Internet appropriately for legitimate reference requirements.

Anyone who wishes to send or receive e-mail through a Library computer must have his/her own personal e-mail account. (Yahoo and Hotmail both offer these free of charge.) Please do not use Library computers for newsgroup postings or for participation in a chat group.

All Rains County Library users age 18 or above with a Library Card in good standing are eligible to use the public computers. **Each person desiring to use a computer must read the “Public Access Computer and Internet Use Policy” and read, sign, and fill out the “Public Access Computer and Internet User’s Agreement.”** Staff is available to answer any questions. Youth from sixth grade (approximately 11 years of age) up to 18 may also have Computer and Internet access provided that a parent/guardian comes to the Library to register him/her. By signing a parental permission form the minor’s parent or guardian accepts full responsibility for the minor’s use of the computer/Internet and for setting and conveying parental standards the minor should follow.

Non-residents may be issued a temporary permit to use the Internet. They must present a driver’s license in lieu of a library card.

Users should know computer basics, including the use of the mouse. The Library staff will assist patrons with Internet use as time permits, but can offer only limited personal instruction. The staff is always available to help patrons locate books and videos about the Internet.

Each user is accountable for his/her actions and activity while on a Library computer. **Unacceptable use of the computer/Internet will result in the cancellation of the user’s computer privilege.** Examples of inappropriate use include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Violation of computer system integrity
- Unauthorized tampering with computer hardware or software
- Storage of data to anything other than a personal diskette
- Violation of software license agreements and copyright
- Violation of another user’s privacy
- Changing any of the Library’s software configurations
- Interfering with the work of others
- Display pornographic or obscene materials
- View, display, or print explicit graphical images in violation of Texas Law: PC 43.24, “Sale Distribution,” or “Display of Harmful Material to Minor”

- Violate copyright laws. U. S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S. Code) prohibits unauthorized reproduction or distribution of copyrighted materials, except as permitted by principles of “fair use.” Responsibility for any possible copyright infringement lies solely with the user. The Public Library disclaims any liability or responsibility resulting hereof.
- Access sexually explicit sites

To maximize computer/Internet availability, and to insure fair accessibility for all, please observe the following rules:

1. When signing up to use a computer for the first time, read this policy and fill out the registration form.
2. Present your Library card. (Non-resident must present a driver’s license.)
3. The computers are available during the following hours:
 - a. Monday, Wednesday, Friday - 10:10 a.m. – 4:50 p.m.
 - b. Tuesday, Thursday – 10:10 a.m. – 5:50 p.m.
 - c. Saturday, 10:10 a.m. – 1:50 p.m.
4. Each person may use a Library computer up to one (1) hour at a time and up to (4) hours in a day.
5. A person may reserve a time slot up to 7 days in advance. If a user is more than 15 minutes late for an appointment, and the computers are in high demand, the user will forfeit his/her time slot.
6. A maximum of two (2) people are allowed at each computer at the same time.
7. Only one computer per family is allowed at high demand times.
8. Please do not use your own disk or CD on Library computers. This will help prevent computer viruses that are common on personal computers.
9. Black and white printouts are \$.25 per sheet.
10. Misuse of the computer or Internet will result in the loss of your computer privileges.

The Rains County Public Library provides free Internet access points or “hot spots” for users with portable computers or devices capable of receiving wireless signals, during normal library business hours. These access points allow users to access the Internet from their laptop computers when sitting within range of the access points.

Library staff will provide general information on the settings necessary to access the Internet via these connections, but are not responsible for any changes users make to their computer settings and cannot guarantee that a user’s hardware will work with the library’s wireless connection.

If a user has problems accessing the Internet over these connections, staff cannot assist in making changes to the user’s network settings or perform any troubleshooting on the user’s own computer. Users should refer to their owners’ manuals or other support services offered by their device manufacturer.

As with most public wireless “hot spots,” the library’s wireless connection is not secure. There can be non-trustworthy third parties between the user and anybody with whom the user communicates. Another wireless user could potentially intercept any information being sent or received. Cautious and informed wireless users should not transmit their credit card information, passwords and any other sensitive personal information (e.g. credit card) that is compromised, or for any damage caused to your hardware or software due to electric surges, security issues or consequences caused by viruses or hacking. All wireless access users should have up-to-date virus protection on their personal laptop computers or wireless devices.

Printers are not available via the wireless connection at this time. If you need to print, please save your work to a CD or flash drive or email files to yourself, then login to a wired library workstation and send jobs to the public printer.

Our Internet Policy governs use of these access points. All users are expected to use the library's wireless access in a legal and responsible manner.

Any restriction or monitoring of a minor's access to the library's wireless network is the sole responsibility of the parent or guardian.

Reviewed by the Advisory Board on May 28, 2009 and approved by the Commissioners' Court on _____.

Adapted from the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, Irving Public Library and Galesburg Public Library's Internet and Wireless Access Policies.

Good luck in your quest for information on the Internet and the World Wide Web.