

Connection

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Protect computer from ransomware

Imagine if everything on your computer was “kidnapped” — including all of your precious family photos and important personal documents. And the only way you could access any of it again was if you paid a lot of money — or bitcoins — to a hacker. Even if you pay, there’s no guarantee you’ll get your files back.

Sounds like something out of a movie, right? Unfortunately, it’s happening in real life. It’s called ransomware. You might have heard news stories about ransomware attacks on hospitals, universities and other large organizations, too.

Hackers do it by encrypting files on your computer — and files you’ve saved to connected hard drives or any shared folders. Once the files are encrypted you won’t be able to open them without the encryption key — which you can get only if you pay the amount hackers demand. That could be hundreds or thousands of dollars.

To protect your computer, keep your machine clean by installing critical software updates for your operating system and security software.

It is also recommended that you practice safe computing habits by using strong passwords and



exercise caution when clicking links in e-mails, social media posts and in online advertising. Ransomware and other malware is often found in unsuspecting places.

To minimize the impact of a potential attack, be sure to back up your valuable work, music, photos and other digital information regularly by making a copy and storing it safely.

If you’re the victim of a ransomware attack, contact the professionals at Technology Solutions at (563) 374-1322 for advice.

SOURCE: <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/>

Four ways to make your Wi-Fi faster

You can optimize your Internet connection by taking a look at your Wi-Fi router. Here are some tips that will improve your Internet experience.

1. Choose the right channel and frequency. Routers have numerous channels. Sometimes logging into the router’s admin interface and changing the channel can make a huge difference. Newer routers also have different frequencies. Generally speaking, 2.4 GHz is

better for homes with multiple floors because the signal travels farther. 5 GHz is great for smaller



homes but offers faster speed, just at a shorter range.

2. Move your router to its ideal position. Keep your router centrally located and away from thick walls made of brick or concrete, water and windows. In some cases, you may need to install an additional access point to provide adequate coverage in your home.

3. Make sure your router is secure. Putting a password on your router or limiting which devices can access your network

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Solar interference

If you notice a snowy picture on some of your video channels the first two weeks of March in the afternoon hours, do not be alarmed. This is the result of solar interference and a natural event that occurs in the spring and fall.

Iowa One Call

Doing any digging this spring? Be sure to call Iowa One Call at 1-800-292-8989 or dial 811 at least 48 hours in advance to have underground utilities marked. The service is free and it’s the law.

Online directory

Telephone directory listings are just a few clicks away with the F&B online telephone directory.

Go to www.fbc-tele.com and click the “Online Directory” link to look up business and residential phone numbers or perform reverse phone number look-ups. Yellow page listings are also available.





FREE TRAINING WORKSHOP
Home/Farm Security:
Nest Cams & Outdoor Wi-Fi
 Tuesday, March 21 from 6 to 7:30 pm
 Learn about protecting your home or farm with Nest Wi-Fi security cameras. We'll touch on camera features and the mobile app. Basic setup requirements and outdoor Wi-Fi networks will also be discussed. Time will also be spent reviewing other smart-home devices including Nest thermostats.

FREE to F&B or Technology Solutions customers. Preregistration is required as class space is limited. Classes held at the Technology Solutions store. Call (563) 374-1322 to sign up or register online at www.fbc-tele.com.



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 Trouble/Repair
 (563) 374-1238 or (563) 574-1238
 Internet Tech Support (24/7)
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 Technology Solutions
 (563) 374-1322

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Increased TV content costs yield rate increase

Keeping up on the latest news, catching your favorite sports team or watching a movie are all benefits of subscribing to TV service.

All of this information and entertainment comes at a price to you as the consumer and F&B Communications as the system operator.

Most local broadcast networks and cable programmers charge a monthly fee to cable system operators for the programs you enjoy when you flip on your TV that we must pay for every household that receives a particular network regardless if anyone in the household watches it.

Network fees have increased at 3 1/2 times the rate of inflation over the past 15 years. Five media companies control 90-percent of the programming and while we work to keep these costs under control, they continue to use their power to demand more money.

Each year most programmers and local broadcast networks automatically raise the rates



they charge F&B and this year is no different.

These increased programming costs necessitate an increase in rates for video services beginning this month.

The cost of F&B's Digital Video service at just over \$3 per day is still an inexpensive entertainment value when compared to the cost for a family to go to the theater, attend a sporting event or go out to eat.

As your local television provider, it is our goal to provide you with the best quality, most popular channels and video services at a fair price.

F&B Communications thanks you for your patronage.

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Four ways to make your Wi-Fi faster

will keep other people from using your network and slowing it down.

4. Get a newer router. You may only have a few people in your household, but if each has a computer, phone, tablet and gaming console that will easily exceed an entry level router's capacity. The router is the brain of the Wi-Fi network and may need a firmware update or replaced entirely to meet the demands of today's multi-device homes.

A strong Wi-Fi signal is not an indicator of fast Wi-Fi speed. You may have the correct channel selected, a security key and a fast Internet speed package, but if your router cannot handle the amount of traffic you are trying to put through it, you will see very little improvement.

If you have additional questions about improving your Wi-Fi performance, consult the pros at Technology Solutions for a recommendation on a new router or to schedule an on-site Wi-Fi analysis and optimization appointment.