

North Valley Public Library
Internet Use Policy
Approved by Library Board 7/19/06

The North Valley Public Library provides free, unfiltered access to the Internet for the purpose of research, communication, and recreation. Public access PCs also provide word processing and other software selections. No station provides support for all file types, browser plug-ins or Internet technologies.

Confidentiality and Patron Responsibility

The North Valley Public Library upholds the right of confidentiality and privacy for all library users. The library strives to balance the rights of users to access information resources with the rights of staff and patrons to work in a public environment free from offensive sounds and images. Users are expected to respect the sensibilities of others when accessing information.

Internet Use Guidelines

Any library customer may use library-provided PCs to access the Internet. Users must sign their first name, initials, or a pseudonym on the sign-up sheet to reserve a computer. Sign up sheets are destroyed at the end of each day.

Each individual is limited to 30 minutes per day of Internet use or at the discretion of library staff. A maximum of two persons may sit/work together on one computer.

There is a per page charge for printing from public computers. Please pay at the check out desk.

Please respect others' privacy by not attempting to observe or comment on what others are viewing. Remain sensitive to the fact that you are working in a public environment shared by people of all ages.

Do not gather around search stations when doing so may obstruct others or create noise that distracts others.

When using public access computers, please avoid loud or boisterous conversation that may disturb others.

As a courtesy to others, log off completely when you are finished with your session.

Misuse of Library Computers

Illegal activities or activities that interfere with or disrupt the network, users, services or equipment are prohibited and not protected by the library's privacy policy. The library does not routinely monitor public computers, but reserves the right to do so when a violation of this policy or illegal activity is suspected. Staff is authorized to take immediate action to protect the security of computers and the network and to enforce the following rules. This includes confiscating any removable media, requiring a user to leave a computer or the premises, and contacting law enforcement authorities.

Internet users are responsible for complying with copyright law, licensing agreements and the policies of individual Web sites that they view.

Misuse of computer equipment or software may result in loss of computer privileges, loss of library privileges and prosecution:

Misuse includes but is not limited to:

- Viewing material that violates federal, state or local laws or regulations, including those regarding accessing, viewing, printing and distributing obscenity or child pornography
- Hacking into the library computer system or any other computer system
- Mishandling, damaging or attempting to damage computer equipment or software
- tampering with computer settings
- Interfering with system operations, integrity or security
- Attempting to gain or gaining access to another person's files
- Engaging in any activity that is deliberately offensive or creates an intimidating or hostile environment
- Violating copyright laws and software licensing agreements or the policies of the individual Web sites that you view
- Failing to pay for printing
- Failing to sign up for an Internet computer, failing to comply with time limits, or refusing or ignoring a staff person's request to give up a computer
- Any other violation of the Internet Use Policy

Caveats

The Internet is a global entity with a wide variety of content. Though it can provide access to excellent information, it also contains information that may be inaccurate, outdated, or offensive to individuals. Library patrons use it at their

own risk. The use of Internet resources carries with it the responsibility to evaluate the quality of information accessed. The availability of information on the Internet does not constitute endorsement of the content by the North Valley Public Library.

The library does not select the material on the Internet and has no means or statutory authority to assure that only constitutionally protected material is available on the Internet. The authority to determine what is illegal (obscene) content rests with the Ravalli County Attorney and the Montana Attorney General.

Files may be downloaded using supported media. Software and other files downloaded from the Internet may contain viruses or spyware that may infect other computers. The library is not responsible for damage to media or corruption of data, including that caused by mechanical malfunction caused by virus or spyware infection while using library computers.

Supervising Children's Use

The public library, unlike schools, does not serve *in loco parentis* (in place of a parent). Librarians cannot act in the place of parents in providing constant care and supervision of children as they explore the Internet or other library resources. The responsibility for what minors read or view rests with parents or guardians.

The following are recommended guidelines for parents and guardians to ensure that children have positive online experiences, whether at home or in the library.

- Use the Internet as a family. Join your children in Internet exploration.
- Explore the wide range of available information and tell your children about sites you consider inappropriate for them.
- Encourage children to use sites you recommend and counsel them to avoid sites you consider unsuitable.
- Provide guidelines for your children on the amount of time they spend online, just as for television viewing.
- Instruct children NEVER to give out personal information (name, address, password, telephone number, credit card number) online.
- Teach children to be good online consumers. As with print information, consider the source, date, and accuracy of online information.

As it does with other library resources, the Library will provide training on electronic resources. It will also make information available to help parents and guardians in their efforts to exercise their rights and responsibilities regarding their own children's use of electronic resources.