



Bell Ringer

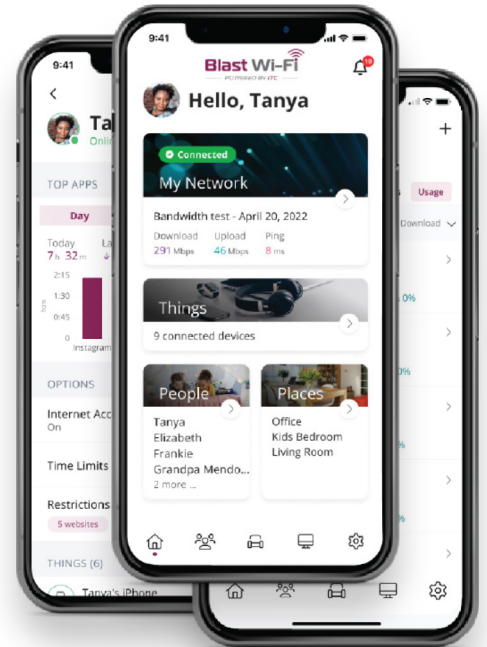
Volume 57, No 11 March 2024
Clear Lake, South Dakota 57226

THE REMOTE CONTROL FOR YOUR WI-FI

Blast Wi-Fi, powered by ITC, allows you to manage everything on your Wi-Fi network. With the Blast Wi-Fi app, you can have peace of mind with total visibility of your entire network. See who and what is connected, set up guest networks so you don't have to share your primary password, and ensure healthy screen time by monitoring usage and creating offline schedules for the kids.

At ITC, we want you to have the best Internet and Wi-Fi experience possible. The Blast Wi-Fi app is one way to make that happen. After signing up for Blast Wi-Fi service, the app is easy to download on an Apple or Android device. The ITC website offers app tutorials by visiting www.itc-web.com/blast-wi-fi so you can discover all the options available to you.

Want to take your Wi-Fi to the next level? Go to ITC's website at www.itc-web.com/blast-wi-fi to learn more about ProtectIQ® for total network security and ExperienceIQ® for advanced parental controls. If you have questions or want to add Blast Wi-Fi, call ITC at 1.800.417.8667 for package options.



WHO'S GOT THE POWER... YOU DO!

The Blast Wi-Fi app gives you the power to control every device within your home network. The easy-to-use app is the connectivity command center for your Wi-Fi, allowing you to create the ultimate Internet experience for you and your family.



- See who and what is connected to your Wi-Fi network
- Quickly create and share a guest network for visitors
- Run a bandwidth test
- Create individual profiles for the users
- Change your Wi-Fi password
- Monitor usage and schedule offline times for healthy screen time habits

ONLINE SAFETY TIPS

By Michael Martinell, Network Broadband Technician

Staying safe online is more critical now than ever before. With a variety of data breaches, cyber-attacks, and online scams, it's vital to take the steps necessary to protect yourself online. From using strong passwords to backing up your data, here are some key tips for staying safe online.

1. Use a strong password. One of the most important first steps to staying safe online is to use a strong password. A password should be difficult to guess, consisting of at least eight characters long, and include a mix of upper and lowercase letters, numbers, and special characters. Avoid using information that can be easily guessed, such as your birthday or pet's name. It's also a good idea to use a different password for each account and service so that the rest remain safe if one account is compromised.

2. Be aware of phishing. Phishing is a technique hackers use to trick people into giving out confidential information or clicking on malicious links. Be aware of emails and messages that request personal information or links to suspicious websites, as these could open up your systems and accounts for fraud or attack.

3. Back up your data. Regular data backups are essential in case of attack or data loss. Several cloud-based solutions offer secure backup solutions that you can use to store your important files. Your operating system might also include backup software.

4. Use secure connections. Using public Wi-Fi networks can be risky as these connections may not be secure, and any data sent via the network can be intercepted by hackers. Using a Virtual Private Network (VPN) that encrypts your data and protects your identity when connected to public networks is best to ensure you stay safe online.

5. Install security software. Installing anti-virus and anti-spyware software is essential to protect your computer and devices from malicious software and other attacks. Keep your anti-virus and anti-spyware software up-to-date to ensure the best possible protection.

6. Update software. As technology evolves, so do threats. It's important to keep your software regularly updated to its latest version to prevent hackers from taking advantage of security flaws in outdated or unsupported software.

By following these tips, you can stay safe online and protect your privacy, data, and identity from potential attacks. Remember, being vigilant in your online security and privacy practices can help keep you safe from potentially malicious threats. It's also important to regularly review your online accounts and change your passwords often to ensure your information remains secure.

MARCH ITC UNIVERSITY

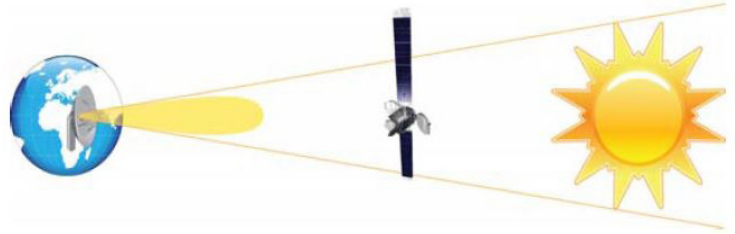
By Holly Stormo, Marketing Communications Specialist

In March, ITC University will teach a computer and Internet security class. We want you to be up-to-date on everything to keep your Wi-Fi secure. Class size is small, so call ITC at 1.800.417.8667 to sign up today.

Classes will be at 10:00 AM on the following dates:

- Milbank - March 13
- Clear Lake - March 20
- Webster - March 21
- Ivanhoe - March 26
- Brookings - March 27

SOLAR OUTAGES



It's that time again when we start to see solar outages. This time of year, the sun's rays can overpower satellite feeds used to deliver TV service. Your TV may experience fuzzy channels, tiling, and frozen or total picture loss. They can last from a few minutes up to 15 minutes per day. These outages occur in the Spring and Fall. As in previous years, we expect to see these outages during the first half of March. If you have any questions, please call ITC at 1.800.417.8667.

CAPITAL CREDITS

Have you cashed your check? If you still need to cash your capital credits check from ITC, please cash it at your earliest convenience.

If you are unsure, please scan the QR code to the right with your phone's camera. The ITC website will pop up with a link to members with outstanding capital credits checks. If your name is on the list or you have questions, contact us at 1.800.417.8667.



Taxes: Every year, Coop members receive notice of the patronage credits they earned the previous year.

Current tax laws say that no part of the capital credits allocated to Cooperative patrons is subject to taxation until paid in cash.

When patrons receive cash for allocated credits, they are only subject to taxation to the extent that the payment for services was deducted on the income tax return for the year the credit was allocated. The non-business portion is not subject to taxation. For more information, please consult your tax advisor.