

# The Connection

MAY 2022

## Save the Date of July 13th

The Runestone Telecom Annual Meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 13th. We'll provide you with more details in the coming months and hope you can join us.



### Contact Us

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Phone: 320-986-2013

Office Hours: M-F 8 am to 4:30 pm

Email: [rtaoffice@runestone.net](mailto:rtaoffice@runestone.net)

Visit Us: [www.runestone.net](http://www.runestone.net)

Find Us:  

### Holiday Observed

Runestone Telecom will be closed on Monday, May 30th in observance of Memorial Day. Trouble calls will be handled by our on-call technicians.

**FEEL LIKE A**  
**Rock Star** 

**BE BOLD WITH INTERNET SPEED!**

Why be shy? Let your inner rock star come out by choosing the ultimate in cool—one of our super-fast Internet plans.

With speeds up to 1,000\* Mbps, everyone in your household's "band" will be rocking online gaming, movie and TV streaming, video conferencing, and more.

**CALL 320-986-2013 TO AMP UP YOUR INTERNET PLAN**

**HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY TO ALL MOMS. YOU ROCK!**

\*Speed availability varies depending on location. Contact us for details.



## Are You Following Us on Facebook and Instagram?

If your answer is "Yes," Runestone Telecom thanks you so much for your interest and support. If you haven't yet clicked on our pages' "Follow" buttons, consider doing so today at [www.facebook.com/runestonetelecom](http://www.facebook.com/runestonetelecom) and [www.instagram.com/runestonetelecom](http://www.instagram.com/runestonetelecom). It only takes a minute.

This action tells Facebook and Instagram you want to see our posts in your News Feed and keeps you aware of the wide variety of valuable content we share. This content may include:

- Updates on fiber network builds
- Technology tips and tricks
- Customer alerts on service disruptions
- Changes to product offerings or hours
- Employment opportunities and employee news
- Upcoming community programs and events
- Holiday greetings and seasonal ideas
- Fun industry-related trivia



Of course, Runestone Telecom's social media pages aren't just about us talking to you. They're also about us talking with you. You're encouraged to post questions, comments, and suggestions, and we'll respond as soon as possible. That's how we get to know our customers better and make our company better.

Please "Follow" along at [www.facebook.com/runestonetelecom](http://www.facebook.com/runestonetelecom) and [www.instagram.com/runestonetelecom](http://www.instagram.com/runestonetelecom).

## Keep an Eye Out for These Scams

Benjamin Franklin famously said, "In this world, nothing is certain except death and taxes." If he were alive today, he might have added scams to that list.

Scams are incredibly common. Chances are, you or someone you know has been the victim of one. They also come in many different forms but are all designed to swindle personal information and/or money. Here are common scams to keep on your radar:

### Natural Disaster Scams

When major natural disasters make headlines, scammers use them to set up fake charities. The FBI recommends you always verify the charity is real with sources like Charity Navigator or GuideStar.

### Fake Officials

The person pulling the scam may pretend to be from Social Security, the IRS, local law enforcement, a bank, or a credit card company. They claim there's something wrong with your account and threaten to take action against you if you don't pay them or provide personal information like a credit card number.

### Sympathy or Romance Appeals

The scammer makes an emotional appeal to gain trust or sympathy, only to ask for money later, saying they need funds for an emergency, fell on hard times, or have legal issues. In an online romance scam, the scammer always has a reason or excuse to never meet in person.

### Frozen Computers

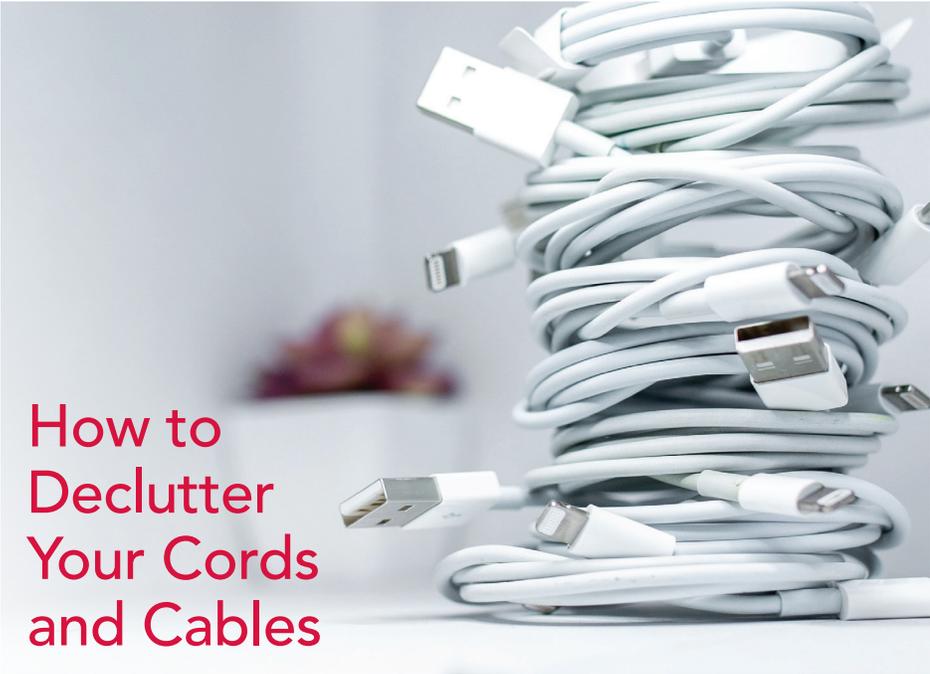
This scam occurs when a user clicks on a pop-up advertisement or downloads a file with a virus or malware in it. It can cause a computer to freeze and show a phone number to call for "help," which is a ploy to gain remote computer access and steal personal information.

### Fake Online Retailers

In this scheme, a seemingly real online store appears to sell merchandise, but instead uses it to harvest personal and financial information. Often the items being shown are ones in short supply from legitimate retailers.

To avoid being taken by these scams, think (and research) before you act whenever you see something suspicious. It's also a good idea to freeze your credit at all three credit agencies — Experian, Transunion, and Equifax — and make sure you use unique and complex passwords and change them regularly.





# How to Declutter Your Cords and Cables

Do your desk and TV center each have a rat’s nest of cords and cables around them? Not only can this look unsightly, but it can also make it difficult to figure out which one goes where. Now’s the time to finally get everything under control.

Fortunately, it’s not difficult to do. There are several key steps to the decluttering process:

- **Hide the power strips and plugs.** While power strips are functional, they’re not particularly attractive. To hide your power strips and organize the cords plugged into them, you can buy cable organizer boxes off the shelf or make your own following the instructions available on YouTube.
- **Collect and tie cords together.** Before you do this, go through the tangled mess of cords one by one to make sure each cord is still in use. You’d be surprised how many times people find cords that aren’t plugged in and just collecting dust. Now you’re ready to gather cords together for better management. An inexpensive solution is to use zip ties at multiple points, so the cords stay neat from the power strip up to the device. Another option is to get zippered or hook-and-loop cable sleeves that conceal your cords.
- **Identify the cords and cables.** To stay organized and better manage all your cords and cables, you’ll want to clearly identify each one. You can do this for free by using something that’s probably in your kitchen right now—bread bag clips. Simply write a brief description on a bread bag clip and loop it around the cord or cable. Alternatively, you can wrap colored duct tape around with an inch or two jutting out. On that space, use a marker to write the description.

Don’t forget about the unused cords and cables that are now stuffed in your junk drawer or closet, waiting for the day you’ll need them again. They’ll fit nicely into the pouches of a hanging shoe organizer, along with other small tech items such as computer mice. To keep cords and cables tidy and prevent tangling, try sliding them inside the cardboard roll from toilet paper or paper towels before storage.

## Runestone Telecom Welcomes New Employees

We’re excited to have **Dawn Bumgardner** join our team. Dawn is our new Marketing Coordinator/Customer Service Associate and comes to us with a background in marketing, customer service, photography, and community networking.



We’re also pleased to have **Chris Schmiesing** join Runestone Telecom as our new Network Technician. His experience in networking, cybersecurity, and computer repair will be an asset to our company and our customers.



## New Members

- Barrett**  
Humann, Glenn.....320-528-2403
- Cyrus**  
Reese, Michael  
& Stephanie.....320-795-2448  
Zimny Jr, Paul.....320-795-2286
- Elbow Lake**  
Heien, Candy.....218-685-2317  
Stonybrook Properties ..218-685-7638
- Hoffman**  
Frischmon, Ann .....320-986-2440  
Prah, James & Hazel.....320-986-2746
- Graceville**  
Wheaton Dumont  
Co-op Elevator.....320-748-7289
- Lowry**  
Stanek, Rich & Shelly .....320-283-2199
- Wendell**  
Biss, Wayne & JoAnn.....218-458-2429  
Symonds III, Fred .....218-458-2270

## Go Green and Switch to Paperless Billing

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the average American uses the equivalent of about one 100-foot-tall Douglas fir tree in paper each year. An easy way to save paper is to convert your billing statements from postal delivery to electronic delivery.

Mother Earth isn't the only one who will benefit, however. When you switch to paperless billing, you'll have less paper clutter in your home and save time sorting, filing, and shredding.

Runestone Telecom offers paperless billing as part of our eBilling program. With paperless billing, we won't mail you a billing statement. Instead, we'll alert you when your monthly bill is ready to review online, then you can pay it with eBilling.

**To sign up for the paperless billing option in our eBilling program, simply visit [www.runestone.net](http://www.runestone.net) and follow the instructions. If you have questions or need help, call us at 320-986-2013.**

## Congratulations to All the Graduates

Graduations are cause for celebration, whether a student is graduating from high school, college, or another type of educational program. Runestone Telecom recognizes the hard work required to reach these important milestones, and we wish all the graduates in our community good luck as they begin the next chapter of their lives.



## What You Can Do About Buffering During Streaming

When you're excited about streaming a movie or TV program, the last thing you want to see is the annoying rotating arrow or spinning circle that indicates buffering is taking place. Before we share tips on how to minimize buffering, let's start with an explanation of why it happens.

Buffering refers to downloading a certain amount of data before starting to play the video. One common form of buffering occurs when your Internet connection is too slow to stream a video in real time. Your device will buffer the video data and start playback when there is enough to prevent video lag. If the streaming video reaches the point where it must wait until more information is available, it will pause, and you'll again see the loading screen. Once the video stream catches up, it plays again.

This process can take just a few seconds or might last several minutes. If the video is long, you might encounter several buffering sessions during your viewing time.

If you experience buffering often and are frustrated by it, you may want to upgrade your Internet speed. A slow connection will delay the delivery of audio and video information, in which case you will see the loading screen. A fast connection can stream movies and TV programs virtually without interruption and easily accommodate high-definition or 4K video. For an optimal streaming experience, we recommend an Internet speed of 100 Mbps or higher.

An additional consideration is how fast your router can send the video and other information to the computers, media streamers, smart TVs, and Internet-enabled Blu-ray players connected to it. Routers designed to work with streaming video, sometimes called AV routers, can stream more data, reducing playback interruptions. When looking for wireless and power-line adapter accessories, check the speed ratings; they indicate whether they're optimized for AV, so you can stream high-definition video and audio.

**If you have questions related to buffering or need help selecting a faster Internet plan, call Runestone Telecom at 320-986-2013 or stop by our office.**

