

Connections

OCTOBER 2025

Handy Reminders

- Conveniently pay your bill with eBill and AutoPay.
- Pay your bill by the 20th of the month to avoid late fees and disconnection. Please don't use staples to attach your checks.

FUSC Rate Change

The current FUSC is expected to increase from 36% to 38.1% effective October 1st.

Office Closure

Our office will be closed for a staff meeting on Monday, October 13th.

Contact Us

100 Runestone Drive / PO Box 336
Hoffman, MN 56339
Phone: 320-986-2013

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

Email: rtaoffice@runestone.com

24/7 HelpDesk for Internet Outages and Technical Support:
320-986-6655
helpdesk@runestone.net

Visit Us: www.runestone.net

Find Us: [!\[\]\(4f6bf54ae7e4144a72d78316053e412d_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(1be454ab98bc856a53cc962da77a541d_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(c0149066729715e1f65b56e37efafeee_img.jpg\)](#)

Runestone
Telecom Association

Thank You for Stopping By!

Runestone Telecom is so grateful to everyone who visited our booth at the Grant, Stearns, and Traverse County Fairs this summer! We also had a wonderful time participating in all the town parades—it's so much fun to represent our company at community events.

We truly appreciate the hard work of those who organize these fairs and parades, which give us the chance to visit with both current and future members as well as meet new neighbors. Your support of Runestone Telecom means the world to us!




Dawn Bumgardner, Marketing Coordinator



Michelle Martinson, Customer Service



Nate Richards and Brady Combs, Network Technicians, at the Traverse County Family Fun Event



We're Celebrating Co-op Month

Each October, cooperatives all across America, including Runestone Telecom, celebrate the role, accomplishments, and contributions of our nation's co-ops.

Co-ops uphold the internationally accepted values of honesty, openness, social responsibility, and caring for others. Through the member-owned and democratic process, cooperatives straightforwardly maintain these values and continue to offer goods and services that consumers feel "right" about. Co-ops don't have to answer to faraway shareholders; they focus on meeting their local members' needs.

Runestone Telecom began in 1949 and as a co-op, we value being able to give back to our community and our members in the form of capital credit checks. Each time you pay for Runestone Telecom services, you're making an investment by providing capital in a company that you and your neighbors actually own. Put simply — our success is your success.

You also benefit from our role as an active community citizen. In addition to the capital credits paid to our members, Runestone Telecom donates generously to many community organizations and programs.

Thank you for being a member-owner of Runestone Telecom!

Don't Believe These Cybersecurity Myths

There are lots of myths about cybersecurity. Let's debunk a few common ones.

Myth: I have a strong password, so I don't need to worry.

It's great if you have a long and strong password with a blend of letters, numbers, and special characters. However, you need more than one. Every account and device should have its own password — don't use the same one in multiple places, regardless of how strong it is. If you reuse passwords, it means that if one of your accounts is hacked, all of your other accounts are at risk. It's also recommended that you enable MFA (multi-factor authentication) for every account, which doubles up your protection beyond your password. The few seconds required to enter a code sent to your phone is well worth the added security.

Myth: Password managers aren't safe because they could get hacked.

Sometimes people express concerns about storing all their passwords in one place. However, high-quality password managers are the safest way to store your passwords. These programs also ensure that you're using strong, unique passwords for each of your accounts. Because of the technology password managers use, the password manager company doesn't even know your master password. When you enable MFA on your password manager, it becomes even more secure. There have been incidents when password manager companies get hacked. However, when you use a strong master password and MFA, you can maintain your security even in these situations. This is why password managers are safer than notebooks, sticky notes, or documents saved on your computer.

Myth: Phishing emails will always be obvious. I'll know them when I see them.

This myth may have been true at one time, but that's no longer the case. Due to the widespread use of AI, both grammar and spelling in phishing emails have improved significantly in recent years, making them harder to spot. Some scam messages can appear almost identical to messages from trusted sources. What you need to look for now is a sense of urgency. Is the message unexpected? Is it trying to get you to act quickly without thinking?





Reliable Internet Can Lead to a Happier Household

In addition to things such as eating meals together, dividing chores equitably, and enjoying family traditions, there may be another secret to household happiness—reliable Internet service.

After all, when a home's Internet connection goes down, it can make the whole family irritable due to the disruption of their regular activities. Everyone's so dependent on Internet these days that even temporary downtime can lead to disharmony. Tantrums may even take place, and we're not just talking about the kids!

Examples of the impact of unreliable Internet on households include the following:

- **Challenges with Work and Schooling**

For many households, the Internet is crucial for remote work and virtual learning. When it goes down, productivity grinds to a halt. Virtual meetings, email communication and access to cloud-based documents are all interrupted. Students, too, can be affected if they're unable to access online coursework.

- **Disruption of Daily Tasks**

Without Internet access, tasks such as online banking, shopping, and appointment scheduling are no longer at your fingertips. This might necessitate delaying the task or accomplishing it in a more time-consuming way, such as shopping at a "store with a door."

- **Reduced Options for Communication and Social Interaction**

For families, especially those with teens or young adults, the Internet is one of the primary modes of communication. Not having access to social media, for example, can feel like being cut off from their communities.

- **Entertainment Standstill**

For many, Internet outages mean being cut off from their treasured ways of having fun and being entertained. For example, households accustomed to spending hours each day gaming or watching their favorites on streaming services may soon grow bored. While traditional activities like board games or reading can take their place, these activities can't always match the variety and excitement of online entertainment.

Fortunately, Runestone Telecom provides incredibly reliable Internet service and are doing everything possible to keep households happy and connected. To learn more, visit www.runestone.net.

Street Safety Reminders for Halloween Night

Did you know that child pedestrian injuries are more likely on Halloween than on any other night of the year? Here's how to help keep Halloween safe for everyone.



Take extra precautions when driving:

- Popular trick-or-treating hours are 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Be especially alert for kids during this period.
- Slow down and travel carefully in residential neighborhoods. Children are excited on Halloween and may move in unpredictable ways.
- Turn your headlights on earlier in the day to spot children from greater distances.

Be smart about trick-or-treating:

- Always accompany young children on their neighborhood rounds.
- Stay on well-lit streets and always use the sidewalk.
- Cross the street at intersections rather than mid-block, and don't walk between parked cars.
- If your older children are out alone, talk with them about the risk of distracted walking. This includes looking at their phone, texting, and listening to music.

**Have a happy and safe
Halloween with your family!**

New Members

Elbow Lake

Penacho, Elsie 218-685-2202
Setran, Gordon
& Brigitte..... 218-685-5270

Holmes City

Zeithamer, Arlene 320-886-5522

Lowry

Lanigan, Theresa..... 320-283-5480

Villard

Binful Inc 320-554-2051

Wheaton

Dobberstein, Joanne ..320-563-8356

Check Your Phone Book Listing

It's time to check how your listing appears in the phone book.

We're working on updating listings for our 2026 Vikingland Regional Telephone Directory. Your 911 address (street address) is automatically listed, but you may list a mailing address. Take a careful look at your listing in the current phone book. If you'd like us to make any changes, complete this form and return it to Runestone Telecom.

Please list my name as:

This is my telephone number:

Add this mailing address to my listing:

On the Job for Carlson Ag Aviation



Our Network Administrator, James Simonson, is connecting IP phones at one of the new office buildings of our business customer, **Carlson Ag Aviation**. Thank you, Carlson Ag Aviation, for being an awesome customer and trusting us with your business phone and Internet needs! You can learn more about this company at www.carlsonag.com.

Congratulations, Michelle Martinson



Michelle Martinson, from our Customer Service team, is celebrating five years with Runestone Telecom! If you've ever called our office, chances are you've had the pleasure of speaking with her. Michelle is dedicated to giving our customers the best experience possible, and she does it all with a warm heart and great sense of humor. She's not only a valued coworker but also a wonderful friend to many.

Help Us Stop Hunger In Our Community

In October and November, we are collecting non-perishable food items and monetary donations for our local food pantry. Please designate checks to Grant County Food Shelf—drop off in our office or our after hours dropbox. Together we can make a difference!

