

GRISWOLD Connections

WINTER 2017

Dividend Checks Mailed

Dividend checks were mailed December 1, 2017, so customers should have received them by now. Dividends are paid 10 years in arrears; therefore, the checks were for services from 2007. If you did not get your dividend check or you have questions, call our business office at 712-778-2121.

Happy Holidays!

Griswold Communications employees and board wish you and your family a happy holiday season. Our business office will be closed Monday, December 25 and Tuesday, December 26 for the Christmas holiday, and Monday, January 1 for New Year's Day.



Contact

Griswold Communications
607 Main Street / PO Box 640
Griswold, IA 51535
Phone: 712-778-2121

Office Hours

Monday – Friday
7:30 am to 12:30 pm and
1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Email us at gctc@netins.net

Visit us online at
griswoldcommunications.com



ENJOY A JOYLY GOOD INTERNET UPGRADE

You'll instantly be amazed at the difference it makes when you move up to faster speeds. We're talking better streaming, better gaming, and better use of your time (since you won't be waiting around watching that annoying buffering pinwheel). Increase your blueSURGE internet speed in December and Griswold Communications will waive the one-time \$27 fee to change your speed.

WHICH PLAN WILL MAKE YOU THE JOLLIEST?

- **10Mbps/3Mbps** - \$29.95/mo.*
- **25Mbps/12Mbps** - \$54.95/mo.*
- **50Mbps/25Mbps** - \$79.95/mo.*
- **100Mbps/50Mbps** - \$104.95/mo.*
- **200Mbps/100Mbps** - \$129.95/mo.*
- **1Gig/500Mbps** - \$229.95/mo.*

Griswold Communications can also help improve your home's Wi-Fi by maintaining your wireless router for a low monthly fee. Ask about Wi-Fi extenders to reach low-signal areas.

**CALL NOW AT
712-778-2121
FOR DETAILS**

*All speeds are "up to" the speed listed. Speed pairings are listed as download/upload. Certain restrictions apply. Online experience is impacted by devices used and their performance capability as well as by wireless router capability and environmental conditions.





Watch Out for Door-to-Door Scammers

Not too long ago, there was another communications company in our communities knocking on doors to try and sell their services. This by itself is not too unusual. The problem was this company was leading people to believe they were representing Griswold Communications, and this was entirely false. We were made aware of this situation from some inquiring customers, but unfortunately, a few people got taken advantage of by these scammers. 769-2550

GRISWOLD COMMUNICATIONS WILL NEVER SEND OUTSIDE REPRESENTATIVES TO HOMES WITHOUT NOTIFYING THE CUSTOMERS FIRST. If you are visited by suspicious individuals, we encourage you to contact Griswold Communications at 712-778-2121 or check with your city clerk as to the legitimacy of door-to-door representatives.

Stay alert and stay informed!

Lifeline Program Helps Pay for Phone and Internet

Griswold Communications offers Lifeline assistance. The Lifeline Universal Service Program is a government-supported program available to qualified, low-income consumers. It offers a discount for eligible services including phone and internet. If you are an existing phone service subscriber receiving the monthly Lifeline discount, you can continue to apply that discount to your home phone or cell phone service. But you can only receive a discount on ONE option — phone or internet.

You must participate in at least one of the following programs to be eligible for a Lifeline Program discount:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Medicaid
- Federal Public Housing Assistance
- Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit Program
- Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance
- Tribally – administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TTANF)
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)
- HEAD Start
- Income Below the Federal Poverty Guideline



If you signed up for a Lifeline discount through the National School Lunch Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, or any other state-run program, your phone or internet provider may ask you to confirm your enrollment in one of the above eligible programs when they do your next eligibility confirmation.

Lifeline phone and internet services will have to provide certain minimum features. Check with Griswold Communications for the current minimum requirements. 763-4374

If you decide to apply your monthly Lifeline discount to either home internet service or a data plan for your cell phone, you must remain with the company that provides your service for at least 12 months. After that, you are free to switch to a different company. If you move to a different state or to an area where your company does not offer service, let your company know. They will guide you through the process of changing companies.

This information was provided to Griswold Communications via Foundation for Rural Service.

Tips for Parents on Making Online Gaming Safer

Online gaming often involves interaction with other computers and live players. It's fun for kids to connect with others, but they also need to know how to protect themselves so gaming remains an enjoyable activity. As a parent, you need to understand what the risks are and how to help your child safely navigate the gaming world.

StaySafeOnline.org, powered by National Cyber Security Alliance, offers this advice to parents about online gaming:

- **Keep a clean machine.** Gaming systems are computers with software that needs to be kept updated with security protections, just like your PC, laptop, smartphone, or tablet.
- **Protect your child's personal information.** Children need to know what is appropriate to share and what is not. Names, birthdays, age, geographic location, and contact information should not be shared. While it's fun to engage in games with players from around the globe, children should retain a level of anonymity to protect themselves from those who might not have the best intentions.
- **Avoid personal photos.** Have your child use an avatar rather than an actual picture of themselves for online gaming. 767-2752
- **Use voice chat safely or not at all.** If your kids play a game that features live voice chat, make sure they disguise their voice. If the game does not have this feature, do not let them use voice chat.
- **Teach your child to think before taking action.** Children need to be wary of communication that implores them to act immediately, offers something that sounds too good to be true, or asks for personal information. They should not accept downloads from strangers. This includes cheat programs that may claim to help them perform better in the game, but really could be carrying malware.
- **Carefully read the ratings.** Make sure you understand the ratings for the games your child wants to play. Some game sites have multiple games with different ratings, so check all of them.

For the best online gaming experience, your home may need a faster internet connection. Call 712-778-2121 to get details on the internet speeds currently available from Griswold Communications.



What's New With blueSURGE television

Stadium

In November, Stadium—KXVO 15.4 Omaha, channel 316—was added to the blueSURGE television lineup. Stadium is a 24/7 multi-platform sports network which televises live college sports, highlights, live studio programming, and classic games.

IPTV KIDS

In early December, IPTV launched IPTV KIDS and did a little rearranging of their four streams. IPTV remains channel 11. IPTV KIDS, 11.2, is now channel 211. IPTV WORLD, 11.3, remains channel 311. IPTV Create has been relocated from channel 211 to IPTV 11.4, channel 312.

KeepTheConnections.com

Griswold Communications is currently in negotiations with broadcasters for retransmission consent. Check out KeepTheConnections.com, an educational microsite that explains retransmission consent.

Scholarship Notice for 2018 Graduates and Their Parents

It's never too soon to be thinking about upcoming scholarship opportunities. Griswold Communications offers a local scholarship to students in our school district. There will also be additional scholarship opportunities available through other associations of which Griswold Communications is a member.

All details have not been finalized yet, but deadlines for submission last year were March 1 and March 15. We anticipate those deadlines to be similar for 2018. More details will be made available as we get them.

Hidden Number Contest

We have hidden randomly selected phone numbers throughout this newsletter. If you find your phone number in *italics* anywhere in this newsletter, please call our office at 712-778-2121 by December 29, 2017 to receive a \$5.00 bill credit.

Last newsletter's Hidden Number Contest winner was Lynn Shafer. Congratulations to you.

Look now to see if your phone number is hiding in any articles. Good luck and happy reading!



Call 211 to Reach Essential Community Services

In many states, calling 211 provides individuals and families in need with a shortcut through what may be a bewildering maze of health and human service agencies' phone numbers. By simply calling 211, those in need of assistance are referred, and sometimes connected, to appropriate agencies and community organizations.

Calling 211 helps the elderly, the disabled, those who do not speak English, those who are having a personal crisis, those who have limited reading skills, or those who are new to their communities (among others) by providing referrals to, and information about, health and human service organizations and agencies. 778-4466

211 reaches approximately 270 million people (90% of the total U.S. population), and covers all 50 states (including 41 states with 90%+ coverage), the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. Yet millions of Americans still need to be connected. To find out whether 211 services are offered in your area and to obtain more information, visit www.211.org.

It works a bit like 911. Calls to 211 are routed by the local telephone company to a local or regional calling center. The 211 center's referral specialists question callers, access databases of resources available from private and public health and human service agencies, match the callers' needs to available resources, and link or refer them directly to an agency or organization that can help.

Types of referrals offered by 211:

- Basic Human Needs Resources
- Physical and Mental Health Resources
- Work Support
- Support for Older Americans and Persons with Disabilities
- Children, Youth, and Family Support
- Suicide Prevention



Individuals who wish to donate time or money to community help organizations can also do so by calling 211.

This content is from the FCC's website. For more information on consumer issues, visit the FCC's Consumer Help Center at www.fcc.gov/consumers.