

Hello Central

FEBRUARY 2017

Thank You for Buying Local

Each time you choose to make a purchase from a local business, it helps strengthen our local economy. According to the American Independent Business Alliance, every dollar spent at independent businesses returns three times more money to the community than a dollar spent at a chain (and almost 50 times more than a dollar spent at an online mega-retailer). Wheat State Telephone appreciates your support and encourages you to buy local whenever possible.

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OFFICE CLOSURES

Presidents Day, February 20, 2017

HELLO CENTRAL EDITOR

Berniece Millsap



KISS TOO-SLOW INTERNET *goodbye!*

You'll love this Valentine's Day value. **Sign up in February for one of our super-fast internet plans and get your first month FREE.*** Ask about **FREE installation too.** Choose from several options, with speeds up to 50 Mbps download and 20 Mbps upload.

An internet upgrade means better streaming, better gaming, and better use of your time. Better kiss too-slow internet goodbye!



CALL 1/800 442-6835 FOR SPEEDS YOU'LL LOVE

MENTION PROMO CODE KISSAD

*Subject to contract terms. Service availability and internet speeds will depend on location. Call us for complete details. Special offer expires March 3, 2017

10 Reasons to Have a Landline Phone

The Federal Communications Commission has offered this advice when it comes to home phone service, "A balanced choice is often the best one—a combination of landline and wireless phones may be the right choice for you."

Here are great reasons to have a landline at your home:

1. When you call 911, your address automatically displays.
2. Gives you superior sound quality and clarity.
3. Works even during an electrical outage.
4. Eliminates the need to charge batteries.
5. Provides unlimited local calling.
6. Never drops your calls.
7. Can't be hacked.
8. Saves you money when you bundle services.
9. Provides you with a directory listing.
10. Keeps your communications dollars here to boost our local economy.

For complete details on Wheat State Telephone's landline service, call 1/800 442-6835.



Have More Fun With Your Photos

Sure, taking a selfie and posting it "as is" on Facebook is perfectly fine. But if you'd like to share photos in more creative ways, download the free Instagram and Snapchat apps:

Instagram (instagram.com) has a built-in photo editor with lots of artistic tools to choose from. Just snap a photo with your mobile device, and then choose a filter to transform the image into a memory to share with friends on Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, and more. You can also follow others on the site that post photos of things you're interested in. The app is free for both Apple and Android devices.

Snapchat (snapchat.com) is a free app that lets you have photo conversations on your mobile device. Just snap a photo or video, add a caption, and send it to one or more friends. They'll view and enjoy it for a few seconds (you choose how long), and then it disappears—unless it's so fun that they can't resist taking a screenshot. You can also use the app to share live video and chat face-to-face.

No Brainer Day is February 27

A "no brainer" is something that is obvious, logical, and easy. What you may not know is there's a whole day dedicated to taking a break from thinking too hard. No Brainer Day is celebrated each year on February 27.

What should you do on No Brainer Day? It's really more about what not to do. This is not the day to over analyze anything. So if you have a decision or project that requires extensive brainpower, you may want to schedule it for another day.

No Brainer Day, however, is the ideal time to complete easy tasks. Wheat State suggests you make "no brainer" moves such as:

- **Sign up for our eStatement at www.wheatstate.com.** It's quick to do and will save you time and money each month on bill paying.
- **Increase your internet speed by calling 1/800 442-6835.** Everything you do online will be more enjoyable and you'll instantly be glad you made the upgrade.

We hope you give your brain a holiday and enjoy No Brainer Day this year!



Beginner's Guide to Streaming Movies and TV Shows

If you haven't yet jumped on the streaming bandwagon, this article is for you! It covers the basics to help you get started enjoying this entertainment technology.

What is streaming?

Streaming is content sent in compressed form in a continuous stream over the internet and played as it arrives. The user does not have to wait to download a file to play it.

What devices are needed?

You can watch streaming movies and TV shows on your smartphone, tablet, laptop, desktop computer, HDTV, or "smart TV." For example, you could connect your laptop to your HDTV with an HDMI cable and stream on your laptop and watch on the TV screen. If you have a "smart TV," it has built-in apps (and app stores) and networking to get on the internet. You can use them to download most of the streaming apps you'd want.



What streaming apps are available?

You have many options here, too. Here are a few of the most popular ones:

- **Netflix** – You can watch past seasons of TV shows and recent movies at a low monthly cost. Netflix also offers original shows such as *Orange is the New Black* and *House of Cards*.
- **Amazon** – This streaming service is available to Amazon Prime members. Like Netflix, it offers many TV shows and movies to choose from as well as its own original content.
- **Hulu Plus** – You can get next-day access to shows from ABC, NBC, Fox, and CW, along with some cable channels. Hulu Plus also offers some movies and original TV shows.
- **HBO Now** – New episodes are available through apps about the same time they are shown on TV. Current and past seasons of most HBO shows are available on demand, as well as hundreds of movies.

What are the internet requirements?

For a good streaming experience, you'll probably want internet download speeds of 20 Mbps or more.

Call 1/800 442-6835 or visit www.wheatstate.com for details on the internet speeds we have available.



8 Ways to Protect Your Personal Information

1. Carry only necessary identification. Do not carry your Social Security card with you.
2. Take steps to reduce the amount of mail you receive that displays personal information.
3. Be cautious when providing your Social Security number. It's okay to ask whether it is needed for the application or transaction.
4. Check your credit report annually using annualcreditreport.com.
5. Never provide personal information over the phone or internet unless you have initiated the contact and have confirmed the business or person's identity.
6. Avoid leaving any personal information in your car.
7. Shred unnecessary documents, especially those containing your personal information.
8. Take your outgoing mail to the post office or postal box rather than using street-side mailboxes.

One way to cut down on the amount of mail you receive that contains personal information is to pay your bills online. To learn about eStatement with Wheat State Telephone, visit www.wheatstate.com.



Fight Back and Take Control of Unwanted Calls and Mail

Your time is valuable. So if you're tired of answering annoying telemarketer calls or having to safely dispose of credit card mailings, take action today by visiting the websites below.

National Do Not Call Registry www.donotcall.gov

The National Do Not Call Registry gives you a choice about whether to receive telemarketing calls at home. Most telemarketers should not call your number once it has been on the registry for 31 days. If they do, you can file a complaint at this website. The service is free and you can register up to three phone numbers (landline or mobile) in the online form.

Consumer Credit Reporting Industry www.optoutprescreen.com

Credit card offers may help you compare interest rates and get good deals, but they can also be stolen by identity thieves from your mailbox. For security reasons, these mailings should be shredded before being thrown away, which can be time-consuming. OptOutPrescreen.com is a centralized service to accept and process requests from consumers to opt-out of these credit card offers. It's a joint venture among the Consumer Credit Reporting Companies of Equifax, Experian, Innovis, and TransUnion.



There are Downsides to Cutting the Cable Cord

Despite the streaming service options now available, the vast majority of Americans still have cable TV service. What's more, some who have tried cutting the cord have been disappointed in the experience and returned to cable TV.

What are the downsides of cutting the cable cord? Here are the major ones:

- **Not all programming is available on streaming.** Some of your favorite shows or channels may be missing if you rely entirely on streaming services. This is particularly true for highly popular programs from premium channels.
- **You will probably need to pay for multiple streaming services.** For example, to get something even close to the programming you want, you may have to subscribe to three or four services. In addition to the costs involved, this also means the hassle of dealing with multiple companies.
- **You often have to wait to watch a program.** Some streaming services must wait until a television show has completed its season's run before it can have a title for streaming, meaning it might be a year before you can watch. Other services may delay the availability of a program anywhere from one day to a full week after it airs on traditional TV.
- **Diehard sports fan may want to think twice.** That is particularly true for NFL fans that simply must watch the games in real time. To do that, you need access to local cable channels, since the NFL Game Rewind streaming service offers only games that have already been played.
- **You could run into problems if your internet service has data caps.** Streaming video, especially HD video, takes a large amount of data bandwidth. Some internet providers put monthly data caps on their services, and consumers that do a lot of streaming can end up exceeding these caps. This can result in reduced service quality levels, dropped streams, or even disconnection.

The bottom line is this: Research carefully and think about all the issues before making a change. You may decide that cable TV service is still the best choice for you.