Public Access to the Internet

Electronic Networks and the Library's Mission

Libraries make it possible for citizens to have access to the information they need to make informed decisions. The Spoon River Library is committed to networking, which represents good public policy by maximizing the use of the resources of all types of libraries. Every library user benefits from expanded access to information beyond the four walls of a sing library building. Spoon River Library uses electronic information networks such as the Internet for a variety of purposes:

- Access shared automation systems that provide access to the collections of the local library and libraries in the region and state.
- Access to information resources available via the Internet.
- Access to general and specialized shared licensed databases available to member libraries through regional and statewide cooperative programs.
- Access for patrons to their electronic mail (email) accounts from library computers.
- Access to the Internet for patrons that bring their own electronic devices and connect wirelessly through the wi-fi in the library.

Relationship to Other Library Policies

Spoon River Library's Public Access to the Internet is part of the library's overall policy structure and should be interpreted in conjunction with the other existing policies. Copies of all library policies are available upon request from a library staff member.

Global versus Local Resources

Most resources available via the Internet and other electronic information networks are global resources rather than local resources. The library does not and cannot control the information content available through global resources such as information obtained from outside sources via the Internet. Internet resources enhance and supplement resources that are available locally within a library. Library users must be aware that this library does not exercise control over information obtained via the Internet:

- Information obtained via the Internet may or may not be reliable or from a reliable source.
- Information obtained via the Internet may or may not be accurate.
- Information obtained via the Internet may or may not be current.
- Links to information on the Internet may not always be valid and may not always be available.
- Certain information obtained via the Internet may be considered controversial by some patrons.
- Ads and pop-up information that appear on the computer screens while accessing the Internet are global in nature and cannot be controlled entirely by the library.

Spoon River Library urges library patrons to be informed consumers and to carefully evaluate information obtained via the Internet. Library staff may be available to assist patrons in making judgments about the reliability of Internet sources, but are unable to provide definitive analysis of every source. The library is not responsible for damages, indirect of direct, arising from a library patron's use of Internet information resources.

Library Patrons' Rights

Library patrons have certain rights with respect to the use of the Internet. This library works with other libraries to preserve and protect these rights, subject to limitations imposed by licensing and payment agreements with database providers.

- Library patrons have the right to confidentiality and privacy in the use of electronic information networks to the extent possible given certain constraints, such as proximity of other patrons and staff in public access areas.
- Library patrons have the right to equal access to electronic information networks.

- Library patrons have the right to access and read all library service policies and discuss questions with appropriate library staff.

Patron Assistance and Instruction
Spoon River Library's staff may provide assistance to patrons in the use of electronic information networks as time and staff expertise permits. This assistance may result in providing access to online documentation and resources for the patron. Formal instruction in particular aspects of electronic information network use may be available.

Use of Equipment and Networks
Spoon River Library requires all library patrons using the library's equipment to access the Internet, do so within the guidelines of acceptable use. The following activities are not acceptable:
- Use for any purpose which results in the harassment of others.
- Destruction of, damage to, or unauthorized alteration of library's computer equipment, software, or network security procedures.
- Use that in any way violates Federal or State law.
- Use that in any way violates licensing and payment agreements between the library and network/database providers.
- Unauthorized duplication of copy-protected software or violation of software license agreements.
- Violation of system security.
- Behaving in a manner that is disruptive to other users, including but not limited to overuse of computer equipment which denies access to others and improper volume of headphones.
- Bringing open containers of liquid or food into the computer access area.

Children's Access to the Internet
Spoon River Library supports the right of all library users to access information and will not deny access to electronic information networks based solely on age. The library recognizes that the Internet may contain material that is inappropriate for children. Parents are expected to monitor and supervise their children's use of the Internet. Library staff is unable to monitor children's use. Parents are encouraged to discuss issues of appropriate use and Internet safety with their children.

Library Procedures
Spoon River Library has developed procedures to assist staff and patrons in the use of electronic information resources. These procedures include (but are not necessarily limited to) the following:

- Anyone wishing to use a library computer must have a valid library card and a signed Internet & Computer Use agreement on file. New forms must be signed each fiscal year starting July 1.
- Library cards will be held at the circulation desk while the computer is being used and will be returned when the patron finishes using the computer.
- Computers are available on a first come, first served basis unless a reservation has been made. Computers may be reserved for professional use by calling the library.
- Computers may be checked out in one hour increments for up to two hours per day. Additional time may be allowed if no one is waiting and there are no reservations.
- Computers will, from time-to-time, be unavailable for public use. The staff of the library will post these times 24 hours prior when possible.
- Both color and black and white printing is available to patrons. Prices are provided at the circulation desk.
- Patrons must bring removable storage media to the library to use to save personal work or be prepared to save it to the cloud storage on the Internet.
- The first violation of computer use will result in a 3-month suspension of privileges. The second will result in permanent suspension.