

## DENNIS P. McHUGH PIERMONT PUBLIC LIBRARY

### *Policy on Use of the Internet; Library Public Computers; and Wireless Access*

The library's public computers allow users to search a variety of electronic resources. Library resource computers are exclusively for searching the library's holdings and selected electronic databases. Internet computers provide information beyond the confines of the library's collection.

#### **Access to Internet Resources**

The Library is committed to providing access to informational resources for Library users of all ages and backgrounds. The Library's computer system provides the opportunity to integrate electronic resources from information networks around the world with the library's other resources. The Library strives to balance the rights of users to access information resources with the rights of users to work in a public environment free from sounds and images deemed objectionable by other Library users or staff.

The Library's goal in providing Internet access is to enhance its existing collection in size and depth and, as a public access agency, to give anyone who wishes to use the Internet the chance to do so.

Library staff will help you use the computers to find the information you need, although they cannot provide extensive one-on-one instruction.

#### *Note re Internet filtering*

The Internet offers access to a wealth of material that is personally, professionally and culturally enriching to individuals of all ages. However, it also enables access to some material that may be offensive, disturbing, illegal, inaccurate or incomplete. Tests by independent agencies have shown that filtering software may help to block access to objectionable Internet sites, but it cannot block out all objectionable sites, and it sometimes blocks useful material. The Library does not employ filtering software.

Because the Library does not use filtering software, parents or legal guardians must assume

responsibility for deciding which Library resources are appropriate for their children. Children who use the Internet unsupervised may be exposed to inappropriate and disturbing information and images. We encourage parents to learn about the Internet so that they can teach their children how to use technology properly and to make wise choices. The Library also has available on-line and in print the pamphlet *The Parents' Guide to the Information Superhighway*, published by The Children's Partnership.

#### **Time Limits and Sign Up Sheets**

To provide equal access for all patrons to the Library's public desktop and notebook computers, especially during busier times of the day, Library staff is authorized to set time limits (e.g., 30 or 60 minutes) for computer users and/or to require users to sign up in advance to reserve computer time.

#### **Precautions**

The Library's computers are in a public area. Others may be involuntarily exposed to what you are viewing. The Library asks that you remain sensitive to the fact that you are working in a public environment shared by people of all ages.

Illegal activities or activities that interfere with or disrupt the network, users, services or equipment are prohibited and not protected by the library's privacy policy. The Library does not routinely monitor public computers, but reserves the right to do so when a violation of this policy or illegal activity is suspected. Staff is authorized to take immediate action to protect the security of computers and the network and to enforce the Library's rules. This includes requiring a user to leave a computer or the premises, and contacting law enforcement authorities.

#### **Rules Governing Use of Library Computers**

Failure to comply with the following rules may result in loss of computer and/or Library privileges.

1. Promptly give up the computer when requested by staff.

(cont. on other side)

2. There is a charge for printing from public computers. The charge is posted. Please pay at the circulation desk.

3. Respect other's privacy by not attempting to observe or comment on what others are viewing. Remain sensitive to the fact that you are working in a public environment shared by people of all ages.

4. Stop viewing any site that creates a hostile environment for other Library users and staff if a staff member asks you to stop.

5. As a courtesy to others, log off completely when you are finished with your session. This also protects the privacy of your search..

7. Do not misuse computer equipment or software.

Misuse includes but is not limited to:

- \* Viewing material that violates federal, state or local laws or regulations, including those regarding accessing, viewing, printing and distributing obscenity or child pornography

- \* Hacking into the Library computer system or any other computer system

- \* Mishandling, damaging or attempting to damage computer equipment or software; tampering with computer settings

- \* Interfering with system operations, integrity or security

- \* Engaging in any activity that is deliberately offensive or creates an intimidating or hostile environment

- \* Violating copyright laws and software licensing agreements or the policies of the individual websites that you view

- \* Failing to pay for printing

- \* Refusing or ignoring a staff person's request to give up a computer

### **Wireless Internet Access**

The Library is pleased to offer free wireless Internet access, enabling the public to use their own wireless devices while at the Library.

Wireless access uses the WiFi standard (802.11b). Most wireless devices should recognize the library network automatically. If your device does not have wireless built in, you must purchase a WiFi compatible network card.

- \* The library does not assist users in obtaining a wireless connection.

- \* Signal strength may vary throughout the Library. Please move to a different location within the Library if you are having trouble securing a connection or staying online.

- \* Library staff cannot perform repairs or troubleshoot your equipment.

- \* Wireless connections are not secure; use caution when transmitting personal information.

- \* The Library cannot guarantee your equipment will work with the library's network.

- \* Do not leave your equipment unattended. The Library is not responsible for equipment that is lost or stolen.

### **Rules for Acceptable Use of Wireless Internet Connections**

Regardless of the WiFi source, wireless Internet users inside the Library or on Library premises are subject to the library's Acceptable Use of the Internet and Library Public Computers rules, with the exception of those rules that apply to library-owned equipment.

Specifically, as a wireless Internet user, you must:

- \* Stop viewing any site that creates a hostile environment for other Library users and staff if a staff member asks you to stop.

- \* Follow the rules of the websites you visit.

- \* Never harass others with prints, images or messages.

- \* View and print only legal material and conduct only legal activity.

- \* Make appropriate choices about the sites you view when others are present, since the Library is a public place that serves children as well as adults.

- \* Use sound-muffling headphones or mute sound to avoid disturbing others.

- \* Never block aisles, exits or access to Library materials.

Wireless users who do not follow the rules for wireless Internet use may be asked to stop using the wireless connection provided by the Library.