

River Falls Public Library

Wireless Internet Access Policy

Approved by the River Falls Public Library Board of Trustees

Date Amended: 11/07/2005

WiFi Is Here: Wireless Internet Access at the River Falls Public Library

The River Falls Public Library now offers wireless "WiFi" access to the Library's Internet service for properly equipped laptops. When you use the Internet in the Library you are accepting the library's Internet Policy. (Please take the time to read the policy before accessing the network.)

Advantages

- No waiting for a free PC
- No enforced time limits...connect as long as you like
- Spread out at a larger table in a quieter area of the building
- Fast access
- Save your files permanently on your own device

Limitations

- You must follow the library's Internet Policy.
- A WiFi network is less secure than a wired network (see below)
- Signal strength varies within the Library
- 802.11b, Also Known as WiFi

Your laptop must conform to the "802.11b" standard, commonly known as "WiFi". New laptops often come standard with a wireless interface. These laptops usually come automatically configured to pick up the wireless signal. Older laptops with a PCMCIA slot or USB port can be fitted with a wired/wireless network interface card (NIC) for about \$80 or even less.

Where You Can Pick Up the Wireless Signal

The entire building is not wireless accessible -- the library steel shelving interferes with the wireless signal. But you should be able to pick up the wireless signal in most areas of the library.

What You Will Need

- Wireless network interface card (NIC). **Please note that the Library cannot assist you with your laptop, card, or configuration.**
- A laptop configured to use the Library's Internet connection (see directions).
- Charged battery -- the library has some accessible electrical outlets near some tables, but not all.
- Compatible headphones if you plan to use audio files. Inexpensive headphones may be available at the Reference Desk.

How Safe is WiFi?

The Internet is a public communications network, which means that there can be untrusted parties between you and anybody you communicate with. WiFi unplugs the Internet and makes personal security risks more visible. WiFi poses the same risks to your personal information that a wired network poses, as well as some new risks. WiFi users need to educate themselves about these risks, and take steps to secure their personal information. Cautious WiFi users may choose not to transmit their credit card information and passwords while using any WiFi "hotspot", including the Library's. The Library cannot assure the safety of your data when you use either our wired or wireless Internet access.

Wireless Technical Information

Wireless hardware and software varies as to the operating systems you may use on your laptop, so we can't give you precise instructions. In many cases, you need to do nothing to hook up (just click on your browser), but you might need to check the following in your wireless software:

- In Network Properties (right click on Network and click on "Properties") click on the Wireless TCP/IP adapter setting and look at its properties. Ensure that you have checked "Obtain an IP address automatically." See directions.
- If you use Windows and have more than one adaptor, you may have to disable the one you are not using.
- If you are using Windows, you will need to have administrative rights to change network settings.
- Some adaptors have a physical switch (very small) that must be turned on in order to connect to the Internet
- Most wireless software has an indicator that tells you a signal is being received. Make sure the link quality and signal strength are both at least "good". If not, move about the room to a location that has a stronger signal.
- Click on your browser and the Internet should come right up!

Please note that the Library cannot assist you with your laptop, wireless network card, or configuration. The Library cannot accept the liability of handling your equipment.