

In Touch

JANUARY 2019



Here's to Strong Connections in 2019 and Beyond

Happy New Year from all of us at ESTech! We hope 2019 brings you new friends to treasure, new opportunities to explore, and new places to visit.

We offer the communications technology you need to stay connected today and tomorrow. If you have questions about any of our services, please call 1-888-999-3778.

Contact

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Hugo, CO 80821
Phone: 1-888-999-3778

Office Hours
M-F 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Email
customerservice@esrta.com

Visit Us Online
www.esrta.com



ESTech Internet...

It's Fast!

HAVE ALL THE SPEED YOU NEED FOR ALL YOUR DEVICES THIS CHRISTMAS!

YOU HAVE #2WAYS2SAVE

Bump up your Internet Speed at no extra cost for 3 MONTHS!

or

Switch to ESTech Internet and your first 3 MONTHS are FREE!

VISIT WWW.ESRTA.COM OR CALL 1-888-999-3778 TODAY!

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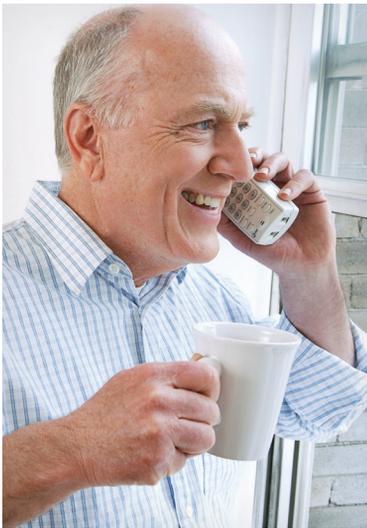
Certain restrictions apply. Offer valid in select service areas. Offer expires 1/31/19. Visit www.esrta.com for complete terms and conditions.

Social Security Administration Warns of Phone Scam

ESTech wants you to be aware of an ongoing Caller ID "spoofing" scam misusing the Social Security Administration's (SSA) national customer service phone number, 1-800-772-1213. SSA has received reports from across the country of questionable phone calls displaying this number on the Caller ID screen.

People who have accepted the calls said the caller identifies as an SSA employee. In some cases, the caller states that SSA does not have all of the person's personal information, such as their Social Security number (SSN), on file. Other callers claim SSA needs additional information so the agency can increase the person's benefit payment, or that SSA will terminate the person's benefits if they do not confirm their information.

SSA employees will never threaten you for information or promise a Social Security benefit approval or increase in exchange for information. If you get a call like this, hang up. Do not engage with the caller or provide any information.



What's the Difference Between a Modem and a Router?



These two pieces of hardware are both involved with your internet connection and have a similar size and shape. They both feature plugs and jacks on the back and flashing lights to indicate they're doing their job. But what exactly is the job of a modem compared to a router?

A modem connects to a cable/wire from your Internet Service Provider that brings in internet data. A different wire that goes from your modem to your computer delivers your internet requests and activity to your computer. Without a modem, you'd have no internet connection.

You could technically go online using just your modem and computer, but there are drawbacks to this. Modems are not smart pieces of hardware and can't do much when it comes to providing internet safety. Also, one modem connects to only one computer, which would leave other devices in your home without an internet connection. This is why most people use both a modem and a router.

A router connects to your modem and broadcasts your internet signal over a certain distance so that multiple computers/devices can connect to your network. It allows you to share your internet connection with others in your home.

In addition, a router makes it harder for hackers to target any specific computer linked to the router, providing a built-in security capability. You just need to make sure your wireless network is secure by following the directions that come with the router.

Speaking of modems and routers, this is a good time to remind you that many variables can impact the overall speed of your internet connection. For example, you can have a state-of-the-art modem and router, but if you chose an internet plan with slow speeds, your connection may be disappointing. Likewise, if you're using an outdated modem and router, the fast internet plan you signed up for won't be able to deliver its full speed capacity.

If you have questions about the modem and router installed by ESTech, call 1-888-999-3778.

Lifeline Lowers Communications Costs for Qualifying Households

Lifeline is a federal program to help low-income subscribers stay connected by providing a monthly discount of at least \$9.25 on their wireline phone, wireless phone, or broadband internet service. You can only receive this discount for one service per household—either phone or internet, but not both. A household is defined as a group of people who live together and share income and expenses.

Lifeline is available to eligible low-income subscribers in every U.S. state, territory, commonwealth, and on Tribal lands.

This program launched in 1985 to provide discounts on phone services. In 2016, internet services were added in recognition of our digitally connected economy. Lifeline discounts on internet service can be crucial to unlocking the internet's economic benefits for disadvantaged households, since research consistently finds low incomes stand alongside less education and older age as the strongest indicators of lower subscription rates.

There are two ways to qualify for Lifeline:

- 1. Your household's income is at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.**
You'll find a chart with this information for households of different sizes here: www.lifelinesupport.org/ls/do-i-qualify/federal-poverty-guidelines.aspx
- 2. You, your dependent, or a member of your household participate in at least one of these assistance programs:**
 - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
 - Medicaid
 - Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
 - Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA)
 - Veterans Pension or Survivors Pension
 - Other Programs for Tribal Lands—Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) General Assistance, Tribally-Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Tribal Head Start, and Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)

Visit www.lifelinesupport.org/ls/do-i-qualify/default.aspx#programs to get additional details about Lifeline qualifications and learn how to prove your income or assistance program participation. If you think your household qualifies for a Lifeline discount, you can apply by asking for an application from ESTech or by visiting www.esrta.com and clicking on Lifeline Access under SERVICES.



Meet the Employees of Eastern Slope: Clint Felzien Operations Manager

I grew up on a farm in Kanorado, Kansas and attended high school in Goodland, Kansas. After graduation, I went to Northwest Kansas Technical College. I began working in the telephone industry when I was 17 years old.

Eastern Slope is the third telephone company that I have had the pleasure of working for. I have also had the pleasure of working for a telecommunications construction company and an engineering firm.

I have been married to my wife Lana for 23 years. We have four children—sons CJ, JB, and Kacey and daughter, Savannah. I have been a school board member, President of the Recreation Board, and a City Council member. In my spare time, I like to go hunting and fishing with my kids or just spend time enjoying the outdoors.

Spend Less Time and Gain More Security with eBilling

You've probably heard many times that switching to eBilling is good for the environment by reducing paper use and saving trees. What you might not realize is just how beneficial eBilling is in other ways.

First of all, eBilling is much faster than paying bills the old-fashioned way by writing checks and mailing them. Most importantly, replacing paper bills and statements with electronic versions allows you to reduce the flow of personal information from unsecured mailboxes, where it can be a target for identity theft.

ESTech offers free eBilling, which lets you receive your monthly bills by email and pay them online with your credit or debit card. To get started, simply visit www.esrta.com today. Click on Login to SmartHub. If you are a new User, click on Sign Up to access our Self-Service Site. Here, you will be prompted through a series of questions to set up your account. If you are a returning User, simply Login to SmartHub.



Four Tips to Help You Pick Your Internet Speeds

Are you confused about which download and upload internet speeds to select? You're not alone. With so many issues factoring into speed selection, there's no single "magic formula" to instantly tell you which plan would work best for your household.

However, we did pull together these general tips to help guide you to making a good decision:

1. **Netflix says you need 5 Mbps to stream HD content and 25 Mbps for 4K Ultra HD content.** But you'll want faster speeds if you plan to connect several devices at once.
2. **Remember your internet connection is shared between all the people, devices, and apps at your house.** So you might need a faster download speed if several people wanted to watch Netflix in HD at the same time or if you wanted to use Netflix at high-quality while simultaneously downloading a large video game or other large file. Chances are, if your current download speed isn't sufficient, you'll hear grumbling from family members about video buffering and other annoying slowdowns.
3. **Upload speeds can be especially important for people working remotely from home.** This is because upload speeds impact tasks such as screen sharing, syncing files to Dropbox, and online conference calls/meetings. While download speeds tend to get most of the attention, don't forget to make sure you're also getting the upload speed that works for you.
4. **You may want to "test drive" a faster internet plan.** Sometimes the only way to fully appreciate what a higher speed will do for you is to experience it firsthand while you do your normal online activities.

To get answers to your questions about internet speed selection, talk to a member of the ESTech team at 1-888-999-3778.