



TECH TIMES

News and Updates for the
TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM
@ Horizon House

FIRST QUARTER 2015

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Horizon House Wi-Fi Is Here!

A FEW REMINDERS ...

- **Goal** Create a high-speed **fiber optic cable** network to provide wireless Internet access throughout the facility – **Wi-Fi**.
- **Wireless Is Not Wireless** The “**fiber**” is a wire distributed to numerous **access points** located in hallway ceilings. These devices send and receive signals through the air wirelessly. Unless electronic devices are wireless-ready, connecting cables and power cords are still necessary.
- **No Charge** There is no cost to residents for Horizon House Wi-Fi, and no additional charges have been added to monthly fees to support this service.
- **Priority** Residents using Horizon House **DSL** will be the first to transition to Horizon House Wi-Fi, followed by residents wishing to eliminate Comcast Internet service.
- **Television** In most cases, the Wi-Fi project does not impact your TV service.



PROGRESS TO DATE

North Tower

Fiber optic cable installation is done. Residents previously using Horizon House DSL to access the Internet have successfully transitioned to Horizon House Wi-Fi. Our **IT** staff has found that Horizon House Wi-Fi is consistently faster than our old DSL system. Many residents in the North Tower are Comcast customers and have chosen to continue that Internet access service, at least for the time being. However, some residents are making the transition from Comcast to Horizon House Wi-Fi, and they are also experiencing improvements in speed.



Central Tower

Fiber optic cable installation is done. Residents have completed or are in the process of completing a Wi-Fi questionnaire. Transition to Horizon House Wi-Fi is underway for DSL users. Here again, many residents are Comcast customers and will be given an opportunity to transition from Comcast to Horizon House Wi-Fi if desired.

West Wing

Fiber optic cable installation is done. Wi-Fi questionnaires will be distributed and transition from DSL to Horizon House Wi-Fi will be initiated in the near future. The opportunity to transition from Comcast service will follow as soon as feasible.

TRANSITION FROM COMCAST INTERNET SERVICE TO HORIZON HOUSE WI-FI

Residents using DSL will be first to transition to Horizon House Wi-Fi because most of the problems with Internet speed and other technical issues have been associated with DSL. Many residents also wish to transition from Comcast Internet service. IT support for that transition will happen as soon as they are certain Horizon House Wi-Fi is working well in each building.

FAQ: Frequently Asked Questions From Comcast Customers

Q. For those who have switched from DSL, is the new Horizon House Wi-Fi now faster?

A. Yes—everyone has experienced improvement—some minor variability exists depending on the distance from apartment to access point.

Q. Have there been any major difficulties for users during the DSL to Wi-Fi transition?

A. No—IT staff has collaborated directly with individual users to ensure their final Wi-Fi set-up meets all expectations, from both IT and resident perspectives.

Q. Do I need to get a new computer in order to use Horizon House Wi-Fi?

A. Probably not. Many older computers can be adapted to receive wireless signals. Don't go out and buy a new one simply to take advantage of our new Wi-Fi system without talking to IT staff.

Q. When can I transition from Comcast Internet service to Horizon House Wi-Fi?

A. Wait until all the DSL users have successfully transitioned to Horizon House Wi-Fi, and it is working properly and consistently in all apartments. We are continuing our Wi-Fi installations in the Central Tower and will move to the West Wing as soon as possible in May.

Q. Can we schedule a time for the transition from Comcast that works with my calendar?

A. Yes—once the DSL transition is successfully completed throughout Horizon House and our Wi-Fi system is working consistently, IT staff will shift their focus to working with Comcast customers. We want residents to be present when we make the change. IT staff will contact residents directly to schedule a time for their transition from Comcast to Horizon House Wi-Fi.

Q. When should I cancel my Comcast Internet service?

A. Once you have transitioned to Horizon House Wi-Fi, do not cancel your Comcast Internet until you are absolutely satisfied that Horizon House Wi-Fi is performing properly and consistently. Some residents are waiting several weeks after Wi-Fi installation in their apartments before they cancel Comcast.

Q. How much will the new Wi-Fi service cost?

A. Horizon House Wi-Fi is provided without additional charge on your monthly bill.

Q. How will my Comcast bill change?

A. When your Wi-Fi is working predictably and you cancel Comcast, the Internet access charges will be removed in the following billing cycle. NOTE: You may still pay charges for other services, like expanded cable TV packages, HDTV, or phone service. Residents, not IT staff, are responsible for working directly with Comcast to cancel services they no longer want.

Q. Will I need to change my email address from comcast.net to another provider?

A. Yes—there are several other providers who do not charge a fee: Gmail, Hotmail, AOL, Yahoo, etc. A helpful suggestion from several residents who have made the switch is to get a second email account from another provider and use it to begin notifying your contacts before you discontinue Comcast Internet services.

Q. How do I get a new email address?

A. We recommend the free options, and the process to set up an email account is similar for each provider. Here are some links for you to look at: Gmail – www.google.com/mail; Yahoo – www.yahoo.com/mail; Outlook – <https://login.live.com>. A step-by-step instruction sheet for setting up Gmail is available from IT.



WEBSITE TESTING UNDERWAY!

PROGRESS

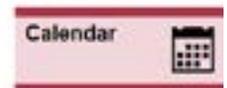
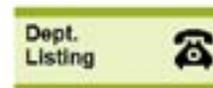
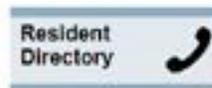
The Horizon House website for residents, *HorizonHouseConnect.org*, is now being tested by 30 residents, including members of the Residents' Council, the Resident Technology Advisory Group (R-TAG), and other interested members of our community. This kind of website evaluation by end-users helps ensure that it's easy to move around and find information on the site. Critical modifications suggested by this group will be incorporated prior to general Release One of the website to all residents, which is anticipated sometime early this summer. Once Horizon House Connect is launched, it will be managed by a small group of residents and staff, the Website Guidance Team.

PRIVACY AND SECURITY AND SECURITY ARE PRIMARY CONCERNS

Privacy of personal information is primarily guarded by requiring individual users to create **passwords** that are not easy to guess, but are reasonably easy to remember. Strong passwords are a combination of letters and numbers that meet minimum guidelines. More details about passwords will be provided as we get closer to Release One. **Security** of the site, measures to prevent "**hacking**" by individuals or groups, is maintained by technological **firewalls** and up-to-date **anti-virus software** on your computer. Our firewall status is constantly monitored by IT staff, and we urge all computer users to keep anti-virus software current.



"I forgot my password, but surely you recognize me!"



GENERAL SITE GUIDELINES

- Access to HorizonHouseConnect.org is intended for residents only.
- The site is protected by individual passwords, which is what makes it inaccessible to others.
- For this reason, individual passwords must not be shared.
- The only information that will be published about all residents is name, apartment number, and telephone number, just like the current print Directory.
- Residents will control whatever other information about themselves they wish to share with other residents.
- Computer owners are responsible for maintaining anti-virus protection.

GLOSSARY of TERMS

Most of the terms in this issue of the Glossary are repeats from prior issues, reprinted here for your convenience. Because of space constraints, we're unable to print the entire Glossary in each issue. Please contact Hollis Palmer (hollisp@horizonhouse.org; x2776) if you'd like a copy of the most complete and up-to-date version of the Glossary.

GLOSSARY of TERMS

access points When creating a Wi-Fi system, fiber optic cable is distributed throughout a building from a central network and terminates in devices called access points (APs). APs are capable of sending and receiving signals through the air to and from devices set up for wireless communication, like laptops or smartphones. Facilities with Wi-Fi have many APs, usually located in ceilings throughout the building.

anti-virus software Anti-virus software is an application installed on your computer to protect you from computer viruses.

DSL DSL, which stands for Digital Subscriber Line, is a way of getting Internet access over phone lines.

fiber optic cable or **fiber** A technology that moves data quickly from one place to another. Fiber is the way we'll bring Internet data into Horizon House.

firewall A firewall is used to prevent people from accessing computers that they shouldn't be accessing. Horizon House has firewalls to protect all of our internal computers (our network).

hacking Hacking is when someone accesses a computer that they shouldn't be accessing. There are many ways to prevent hacking, such as passwords and firewalls.

IT IT stands for Information Technology. An IT department is typically responsible for building, maintaining, and supporting an organization's computers, networks, and software applications. At Horizon House, the Information Technology department does all that and also acts as in-house consultants to residents about their computer concerns. (Note that the Facilities department handles other aspects of technology, notably TV, phone, and audio-visual services.)

password A word or phrase that you invent, consisting of a sequence of letters, numbers, and/or symbols, which permits access to your information. A password is intended to protect your information and should not be shared. A so-called "strong" password uses a mixture of characters that would be difficult to predict.

privacy Ensuring that individuals retain control over their own information, including what information is collected about them, how it is used, who is able to use it, and who maintains it. The most important privacy components are providing individual credentials that include a user name and a strong password, combined with organizational policies that govern who has access to what.

security Preventing access to information by unauthorized persons, including unauthorized viewing, copying, alteration, or destruction of that information. The most important security components are technology tools such as firewalls and protection against computer viruses.

Wi-Fi Wi-Fi is how you access other computers or the Internet from your computer while you are not connected to any wires. It is typically used by laptops, smartphones, and tablets.



"Hit Any Key To Continue"