Watertown Public Library Internet Policy for Adults

The Internet enables the library to provide information beyond the confines of its own collection. However, it is an unregulated medium. As such, users are cautioned that information and images can be encountered which may be considered controversial and/or offensive. The provision of access does not mean or imply that the library sanctions or endorses the content users encounter. The library provides unfiltered access in the adult reference area. The library offers a filtered computer in the children's room and parents may confine their child's access to that computer. The policy applies to patrons and staff.

User Responsibilities

A. The Internet computers are located in public areas used by library patrons of all ages, backgrounds, sensitivities and values. Individuals are expected to consider this when accessing potentially controversial information and images. Individuals who violate the rules of responsible use set forth in section C of this document will lose Internet access for 6 months from date of infringement. Watertown Public Library staff will determine what actions constitute a violation of this Internet policy.

B. Internet users are expected to use this library resource in a responsible and courteous manner and to follow all Internet related rules, regulations and procedures established by law and the policies of the library board. Patrons under the age of 18 may use the Internet without a card if a parent or legal guardian, who has a library card, remains with them at the computer. (Conversely, parents of patrons under the age of 18 may also use the Internet without a card if the minor has a library card and remains with them.)

C. Responsible, courteous use of the Internet includes:

- Using the library's Internet resources for educational, informational and recreational purposes only.
- Recognizing that the Internet, like all of the library's information sources, must be used and shared in a manner which respects the rights of others and refrains from activity that prevents others from using it.
- Respecting intellectual property rights by making only authorized copies of software or data available on the Internet.
- Respecting the privacy of others by not misrepresenting oneself as another user; by not accessing or modifying files, passwords or data of others without authorization; and by not accessing other computer systems without authorization.
- Abstaining from illegal or unethical use of the Internet.
- Abstaining from altering or damaging the equipment used to access the Internet.
- Abstaining from the deliberate propagation of computer viruses or worms.
- Abstaining from the display of threatening, harassing or abusive language and images.
- Abstaining from the use of images or language to sexually harass other patrons or employees.
- Abstaining from the display of obscene images or language.
- Abstaining from the display of sites which perpetrate hate crimes.
- Not exposing children to harmful materials as per *Section 948.11 of the Wisconsin Statutes.*

D. In addition to this specific policy, general library rules regarding behavior and disturbances will be enforced. Violation of library policies and rules may result in suspension or loss of the privilege to use the Internet. Illegal activity involving the library's Internet resources will be subject to prosecution.

Children and the Internet

It is the responsibility of parents to determine and monitor their children's use of library materials and resources. Parents and guardians must sign an Internet use permission form for any child from the age of 3 to the age of 18. Children under the age of 3 are not allowed to use library computers. Children ages 3 to 6 must be assisted in computer usage by an adult.

The library does offer filtered Internet access in the children's room for children up to age 12. Parents may choose to confine their child's access to the filtered computer or allow them access to any Internet computer. Even with filters, please be aware that the library cannot guarantee users will not encounter information or images that are offensive or disturbing to them. **For the safety of children in the library, patrons over the age of 12 may not use the computer in the children's room.**