Ely Public Library Internet Policy

In an effort to provide a wide variety of information in a diversity of formats, the Ely Public Library offers Internet accessibility to its patrons. In doing so, the Ely Library does not monitor and has no control over the information accessed through the Internet.

Evaluating Internet Information

The Internet offers access to many valuable sources of information, both locally and worldwise; however, some material found on the Internet may be inaccurate, incomplete, dated, or offensive to some individuals. Information on the Internet is constantly changing – this makes it impossible to predict what information is available at any point in time. Users must take responsibility for determining validity and appropriateness of information found on the Internet.

Access by Individuals (including minors)

The Ely Public Library affirms the rights of individuals to access constitutionally protected materials. Freedom of expression (a foundation of self-government) encompasses the right to freedom of speech and the corollary right to receive information. However, individual users may not use the computers to display graphics that are obscene under Minnesota Statutes Section 617.241 or use the computers for illegal purposes. The Ely Public Library also uses a filtering device on Internet access to comply with federal CIPA regulations. Federal law allows an adult to request that a CIPA-affected site be temporarily unblocked for bona fide research or other legal purpose.

It is a parent's right and responsibility to provide guidance for their own children's use of library materials and resources, including electronic resources. The Ely Public Library asks parents to sign an Internet Permission form before their child uses the Internet for the first time at our library so parents are aware that their children are using this resource. The Ely Public Library will not monitor sites, chat rooms, or other usage by children for parents. The Library encourages parents to work with their children to select material that is consistent with their personal family values.

User Security

Users should be aware that the Internet is not secure and third parties may be able to access information that users enter. The Ely Public Library will not release information on user activity except as required by law or when necessary for the proper operation of the library.

Rules Governing the Use of Library Computers

1. Due to limited resources available for providing public Internet access, the Library may set time limits for any individual wishing to use the Internet. This may be enforced through a queue or advance sign-up system.
2. Users may not use the network for unauthorized entry into other computational, informational, or communication services or resources. Also, users may not access the areas of the computer not set aside for public use (i.e. the hard drive of the computer, etc.).
3. Users should not distribute unsolicited advertising, invade the privacy of others, or engage in any activity that is harassing or defamatory.
4. Users may not make any attempt to change or damage computer equipment or software.
5. Users may not use the Internet for any illegal activity (including violation of copyright or the rights of third parties) or in a manner inconsistent with the Library's tax-exempt status or proper operation.

Violations of these rules may result in loss of access. Unlawful activities will be dealt with in an appropriate manner.

Approved on 3/15/07 by the Ely Public Library Board.