



BTES NEWS

Bristol Tennessee Essential Services

Electric • Internet • Telephone • Cable

Winter Special Edition 2021 - For customers of Bristol Tennessee Essential Services

How the Pandemic Changed our Internet Habits

Internet usage soared 25 percent within a few days in mid-March as the Coronavirus pandemic started forcing Americans to stay home, a Wall Street Journal analysis found. As children began remote learning and adults began working from home, the need for fast, reliable, and cost-effective Internet became a necessity.

"When BTES began researching the build out of our communications system (which we built in 2005) we knew we had to have a system that could handle future growth," explained BTES CEO Mike Browder. "As we all know, technology changes quickly, so we wanted a system that could easily handle faster and faster speeds as our community needed it."

BTES decided on a fiber optic system.

"When we decided on using fiber optic technology, we saw it as an opportunity to be 'future-proof' realizing that we could change the electronics on the each end and the fiber in between could stay the same," Browder continued. "So we have a system that we can upgrade as time goes on without changing out everything - which is much more cost effective."



This has proven to be very beneficial in the year 2020 as the need for fast and reliable Internet service sky-rocketed.

Browder explained, "We were ready. We've always been ready. Having the fastest Internet in the United States that is fully built out to our entire Internet service area really helped our community more easily transition to online learning and working remotely."

BTES' offers a variety of speeds to meet the individualized needs of each customer.

"We have speeds for those customers that only need the Internet for basic browsing and checking their email to the fastest speeds so that an entire household can be using the Internet for schooling, working, gaming, and so much more," said Browder.

For more information about BTES' Internet service offerings, visit www.btes.net

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Be Prepared, Be Ready

As we start 2021, there is one thing that we know for sure: things will be different. As things change, we need to be prepared and ready for new challenges.



During March 2020, we began dealing with COVID-19 and the safety of our customers and employees while continuing to serve our customers. This included not getting COVID-19 ourselves or unknowingly giving COVID-19 to our customers or fellow co-workers while still working to keep our customers well served.

Over the years we have dealt with ice storms, snowstorms, tornados, lightning storms, floods, etc. There have been damages to our facilities, and numerous customers having much-needed services off. We approached COVID-19 with a similar mindset.

When there is an outage, our first response is to get our customers' service back on quickly and safely. We have plans and processes in place based on past events. After each major event, we do what we call an autopsy – a complete examination of all that went wrong and what we did to correct the problems. We look at what went right and in what areas we need to improve.

When we start the restoration process there is not time to think "this is bad" or about how much work there is to do, how awful it is, or how cold or hot it is. We have a job to do quickly and safely. We know that we have customers that need our services, and we want to restore those services as soon as possible.

Back in March of 2020, we knew the COVID-19 emergency was going to be different than any issue we had previously encountered but we also knew that we could look back at how we handled previous outages and use our learnings to help make decisions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our history of solving major problems quickly gave us an outline for making the big decisions we knew we would have to make.

We quickly decided that we needed to close our office to customers and that numerous employees should work from home instead of in the office. On March 17 at 5pm, we closed our office to customers. By March 18 at 8:30am, over half of our office employees were working from home. We have continued to make improvements and adjustments, as necessary, over the past ten months.

Our employees have worked hard to serve our customers and each other well. Our history of planning for the future and preparing for potential outages has helped us throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. We work hard to plan in everything we do and have the mental preparedness to get important jobs done quickly and safely. For our customers and fellow employees, we will continue to be prepared and be ready.

Thanks to our customers, employees, and everyone else that has had a hand in helping make this work.

Good luck...

Mike Browder

BTES News

Owned and published by Bristol Tennessee Essential Services, serving more than 33,000 electric customers and over 18,000 fiber customers.

Dr. R. Michael Browder
Chief Executive Officer

Address changes, news items and suggestions should be sent to:
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Our Mission

To provide service to our customers, employees and community that exceeds their expectations

Our Vision

To be the best electric, Internet, telephone and cable television provider for the benefit of our customers.



ROUND UP

to Help Your Neighbor

Help Your Neighbors
in need pay their
electric bill.

WWW.BTES.NET/ROUNDUP



FRANCES AND EUGENE ARE BACK!

Who in the world are Frances and Eugene?
Our Bluff City Eagles, of course!

Frances and Eugene have been preparing their nest for the upcoming nesting season. We are hoping for another exciting season of watching our eagles! Eggs are normally laid sometime in early January.

For BTES IPTV cable customers, you may view the live broadcast on Channels 1001 and 1002. For more information, visit the ETSU Department of Biological Science's website.



The fastest and most reliable Internet for your whole house...

1 Gigabit
\$99.95



...and all of your devices.

www.btes.net

Internet Facts

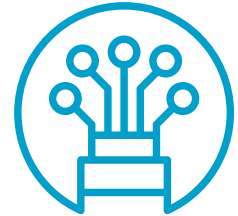
Broadband

The word broadband refers to high-speed, high capacity, reliable Internet access. The minimum speed to be considered broadband is 25 megabits per second (Mbps) for downloading and 3 Mbps for uploading



Delivery

Internet service through BTES is delivered through a fiber-optic line connected directly to your home or business and sends light through glass for an extremely fast and reliable connection.



Speeds

Your Internet speed has a download (the first number) and an upload (the second number) speed. Both are very important!



Download

Download speed will determine how quickly you can receive information from the Internet. For example, you may use the Internet to download music files, view websites, or watch TV online - all of these functions require information to be downloaded from the Internet.



Upload

Upload speed will determine how quickly you can send files, information, and data to the Internet. For example, when you put pictures on social media sites or use a search engine, you are uploading data to the Internet.



Fastest Internet

small cities <100K

- Bristol, TN
- Celina, OH
- Dalton, GA
- Laramie, WY
- Ozark, AL
- Evanston, WY
- Hays, KS
- Monmouth, OR
- Dickinson, ND
- Cedar Falls, IA

10 Gigabits

BTES provides the fastest Internet available in the United States with speeds up to 10 Gigabits per second.



VIDEO GAME SAFETY AND SECURITY

A note from Mike Parker, BTES Supervisor of Networks

Gamers who play on the PlayStation or Xbox platforms may be aware of the threat of Denial of Service attacks (DoS). These are happening more frequently and, although we can't stop them, we are doing a lot to reduce their effects.

When someone is playing an online-based video game, sometimes another player will threaten them by saying they are going to kick them off the Internet. This person may also use terms like "nuke," "boot" or "bounce." When a person is making this threat, they will find the other person's IP address and launch a DoS attack using malware.

This attack then floods data from hundreds, or even thousands, of infected computers from around the world into the user's network (i.e., into the BTES Internet network if they are one of our Internet customers). The user's connection takes the bulk of the flood, but the flood can also disrupt Internet access for other customers.

This is illegal per the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act. If you are attacked, do not retaliate.

If this happens to you, please note the date and time of the threat, along with the screen name of the person who made the threat. Email that information to abuse@btes.tv, and also report the user via your PlayStation or Xbox console.

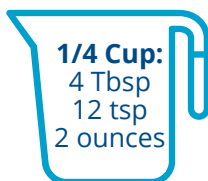
Through a few years of working with customers who have been attacked, I have found that these attacks can stem from "poor sportsmanship" in which a player may say things or behaves in a way that instigates the attack.

I've run into this with both kids and adults. Often, kids are playing online games against other kids but may not actually know the identity of one or more other players depending on the game. I encourage parents to keep up with what their kids are doing online.

We are always monitoring the BTES network for attacks, and proactively safeguarding our customers from known hackers and attackers. We ask that our customers remain vigilant and report any suspicious online activity.

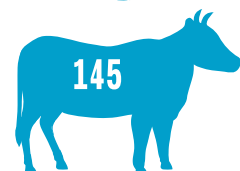
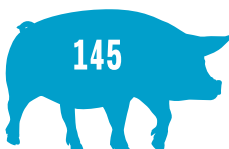
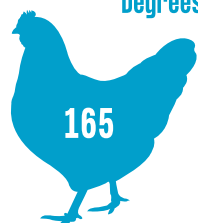


Kitchen Conversions



Safe Minimum Cooking Temperature

Degrees Fahrenheit



The Lighter Side

Where does a snowman keep his money?

In a snowbank!

Favorite Recipes

Creamy Tortellini Soup

- 8 cups low-sodium vegetable or chicken broth
- 1 1-lb. bag frozen peas and carrots
- 10 oz. fresh cheese tortellini
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- Kosher salt and black pepper, to taste
- Shaved parmesan cheese & croutons, for topping
- Olive oil, for drizzling

Bring the broth to a gentle boil in a medium pot over medium-high heat. Add frozen vegetables and return to a gentle boil. Add the tortellini and cook until almost tender (3-5 minutes). Add the heavy cream and cook for another two minutes. Add salt and pepper to taste. Ladle into bowls and top with shaved parmesan and croutons. Drizzle with olive oil.

Hot Spiced Apple Cider

- 4 cups apple cider
- 1 apple, (cut into slices)
- 1 orange, (cut into slices)
- 3 cinnamon sticks
- 2 slices fresh ginger
- 1 teaspoon allspice

Add all the ingredients into a large pot. Bring to a simmer, and cover. Simmer for 10-15 minutes. Serve.

KEEP YOUR INFORMATION SAFE AND SECURE

Safety and security are top priorities of BTES. As a reminder – we never ask anyone to purchase a gift card to pay their bill and we don't ask for credit card information over the phone. If you receive a suspicious phone call demanding payment - don't give out personal information, including account or credit card numbers.

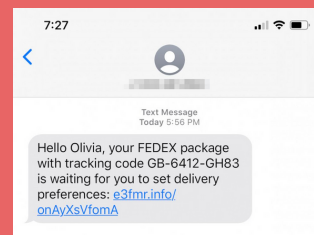
Also, be aware of emails that request confidential information (called phishing). Perpetrators want you to open email attachments or give out personal information and they do so by acting like legitimate sources. Just because an email says it is from an address you know, doesn't mean it is legitimate. Hackers spoof names and email addresses to trick the recipient into believing it is real. Look for things that do not look right such as misspelled words, broken English, and poor grammar. Don't open attachments unless you are sure of the sender and were expecting the attachments. Don't open attachments ending in EXE, BAT, PIF, or JS. Even ZIP attachments are suspect.

To verify the authenticity of any communication you receive from BTES, call us at 423-968-1526. We strive to make our customers aware of potential scams so they can protect themselves from becoming victims of identity theft and other fraudulent activities.

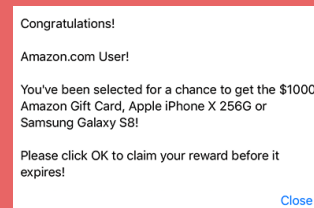
For additional information about keeping your information safe and secure, visit the Internet FAQ page at www.btes.net



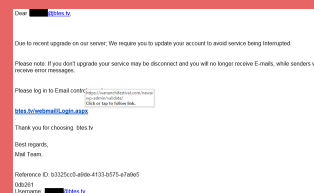
TEXT FROM UNKNOWN SENDER WITH LINKS:



GIVEAWAY POP UP:



PHISHING EMAIL:



DO WE HAVE THE BEST CONTACT INFORMATION FOR YOU?

To ensure we have the best contact information on your account, please log into your account at www.btes.net and verify your phone number and email address; or simply fill out this form below and mail it to BTES or drop it off at any of our dropbox locations.

ACCOUNT NAME:

ACCOUNT NUMBER:

PHONE NUMBER:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

COMMENTS:





YOUR COMMENTS ARE IMPORTANT

Please list the articles you found most interesting in this issue of BTES News, then clip out this form and mail it to the address below. (Winter Special 2021)

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Other comments, story ideas or questions:

Please return to:
BTES News, PO Box 549, Bristol, TN 37621

Name and address (optional)



**Fastest Internet.
Most reliable services.**