

The Communicator

News from your local coop to keep you connected.

April 2015

SGC-TV

Spring Grove Communications started offering TV (video) to our customers six years ago. In the past six years there have been many adjustments to the channel line-ups offered. We started out offering only two packages and now we have three packages. Our Basic package includes 20 channels, Enhanced package includes 85 channels - 54 are standard definition (SD) and 31 are high definition (HD) and our Expanded package includes 96 channels. The high definition (HD) package started with 16 channels and now has a total of 58 HD channels – that's a lot of HD! We have also added whole home DVR to all our DVR customers and Watch TV Everywhere for our Expanded customers. That's a lot of improvement in the past six years!

The main reason SGC started offering video was so our customers had another video choice, especially our rural customers. You still have that choice. Here's a list of why you want to be our customer:

- Friendly, local customer and technical service providing you prompt support. Your calls are answered by us.
- Money spent with us stays in the community.
- Local channel 4 that broadcasts local sports, parades and live city council meetings along with a calendar of events.
- One point of contact and one bill for TV, Internet and Phone – if you have questions regarding your bill we are available for you to call or stop in our office.
- We are a telecommunications provider keeping the small town benefits of Spring Grove competitive with rivaling big town technology.
- Paid back over \$9.2 million to SGC customers.
- Pay capital credits on TV packages.

Every year, sometimes twice a year, programmer contracts are negotiated. With these negotiations channels are sometimes added and sometimes removed and of course the programmers pass on video price increases. With this contract go-round, the video cost passed on to SGC has been \$4-\$6 per month per subscriber. We know that is a lot of money when you crunch the numbers so in an effort to help keep the cost as low as we can, SGC will only pass on a \$4 increase to its customers. Effective May 1st, 2015, all three of SGC-TV packages (Basic, Enhanced & Expanded) will increase by \$4 a month.

We value you as our customer and hope you continue to choose us!

New Residential Members

Misty Acker	330 S. Division Apt 3	498-5137
Larry & Heidi Albrecht	110 1st Ave SW	498-5075
Darrien Black	1275 380th St Decorah IA	492-3994

Volunteer Week

April 12-18th is National Volunteer Week. In celebration, TaskTakers is hosting an event at the Spring Grove Cinema Saturday, April 18th at 10am. All are welcome to join us for donuts and refreshments. There will also be a special guest speaker, Carrie Enright, LSW, Senior and Caregiver Advocate with SEMCAC, giving a short presentation on ways to relieve stress. Not a volunteer or participant but want more information on TaskTakers? This event is for you too. We will have information on how TaskTakers works for someone needing assistance and how to become a volunteer. Public is welcome!

Get The Most Out of Your Features

Do you have voice mail from SGC? Do you know all the great features it has? It's not your basic answering service, it's much more! SGC Voice Mail allows you to assign a greeting to a specific number. You can also schedule a time of day you want a specific greeting to play. Your messages can be emailed to you as an MP3 file so you can listen to it on your computer and forward the message to someone else if needed. You can also have the message sent to you as a text message. How cool is that? Are you tired of not getting your voice mail messages in a timely manner from your cellular provider? SGC Voice Mail can take care of that issue too. Call us to get the most out of your voice mail service with SGC or to get signed up.



Your Local Technology Headquarters
507-498-3456 • sgc@springgrove.coop • www.yourlocal.coop

Telephone Scams

Have you received a phone call from someone telling you your computer is infected with a virus and they can fix it for you? Or maybe you received a call from someone claiming to be with the IRS and you owe taxes and payment must be received immediately. How about a postcard in the mail stating you won a \$100 gift card and all you have to do is call to claim it. These are just a few of the top 10 scams listed on the Better Business Bureau's website for 2014. Schemers are clever so don't let them out smart you!

Here is a list of the top 10 schemes of 2014 listed by the Better Business Bureau.

1. **Bogus IRS calls** - Caller claims to be affiliated with the IRS and states you owe taxes and must be paid immediately using a pre-paid debit card or wire transfer. Those that refuse to pay are threatened with arrest. The IRS will not call you. **They only contact people by mail in regards to unpaid taxes.**

2. **The Caller ID Scam** - Phone rings and caller ID shows your name and number. If you answer, a computerized message claims to be able to lower your credit card interest rates. If you press 1 to 'opt out' the schemer knows this is a legit number and your number is added to a list which is then sold to other schemers. **Calls promising to lower your credit card interest rates are not legitimate.**

3. **Timeshare Scams** - If you own a timeshare and receive a call stating a buyer or renter has been secured for your timeshare it is not real! You are eventually asked to provide funds up front to cover transfer fees, title or closing cost and or taxes in order to close the deal. **If you do own a time share and are trying to sell it, ask the caller for their name and number to call them back. Chances are they will hang up on you.**

4. **Online Pet Scams** - There are websites claiming to offer purebred puppies for free or at a very low price. Payment needs to be made to a third party shipper or a prepaid debit card and the puppy never arrives. **Only purchase purebred puppies from a reliable breeder or check out your local shelter to adopt a puppy.**

5. **Mystery Shopping Offers** - You may receive mailed solicitations, accompanied by a sizable check to become a mystery shopper. The check looks legitimate but it is bogus! **Legitimate mystery shopping firms do not operate in this manner.**

6. **Tech Support Scam** - You receive a call out of the blue saying there is a problem with your computer. A

'helpful' expert offers to help you fix it and asks for your credit card information. The 'expert' then gets access to your computer with your help and then has access to other sensitive or financial information. **When there is a problem with your computer YOU call the experts, they do NOT call you!**

7. **Sweepstakes/Lottery Solicitations** - You receive a notice saying you've won a huge amount of cash. All you have to do is pay the taxes, insurance and fees. Never send money to sweepstakes or lottery solicitations. **If you have to claim your winnings you have not WON anything!**

8. **Bogus Postcard/Survey Scams** - Similar to the sweepstakes/lottery solicitations. You receive a postcard claiming you won a \$100 gift card and all you have to do is take a short survey. This survey will eventually ask you for your credit card and personal information. **You've won nothing but a headache when the schemer starts charging on your credit card.**

9. **Fake Subscription Renewal Notices** - Notice of renewal is received promising the lowest rates on newspaper or magazines. These renewals are sent by third party and you never receive the subscription. **Renew subscriptions directly through the publisher. They usually cost less too.**

10. **Grand Schemes** - You may receive a phone call, email or postcard stating you were awarded a federal grant. To receive the grant you need to pay the processing fees. **Federal grants do not require processing fees.**

Remember, if you receive a phone call, email or something in the mail stating you've won something you really have not! Protect yourself and your identity by never giving out your credit card, banking, social security or any other personal information to anyone! If you think the call maybe legit, ask for a telephone number where you can call them back. These calls are not just received on landlines, they are received on cell phones as well. Always, always be leery and it's better to be safe than sorry.

The top 10 scams can also be found at www.bbb.org. You can also call the Better Business Bureau at 1-800-646-6222 Monday – Friday from 8am – 5pm if you have any questions on a call, email or mailing you have received.