



Bell Ringer

Volume 59, No 8 December 2025
Clear Lake, South Dakota 57226

IT'S TIME FOR CAPITAL CREDITS

The Biggest Payout in ITC History

This December, ITC will be paying out capital credits for the seventh year in a row! We will pay 2013 and 2014 in full, along with 25% of 2021 and 10% of 2023. This payout equals approximately \$10.6 million being paid out to our Cooperative members this year, making it the largest payout in ITC history. Checks will be mailed early in December. Active members with a distribution of \$100 or less will receive a credit on their bill.

It's great to be an ITC member! Capital credits are a significant benefit of being a Coop member. As a Cooperative member, most of our profits are returned to you through capital credits. In August, your bill included an allocation statement from 2024. This year, your allocation statement showed that 57% of the amount you paid for applicable services was allocated back to you. ITC has paid back its members nearly \$41 million over the past seven years.

Because you subscribe to products and services provided by your local Cooperative, ITC can provide you with these capital credits payouts. When you support your Coop, you also help to build and maintain quality telecommunications for your communities. Your support also enables ITC to offer new products and services at affordable rates. Together, we can make a difference.

Thank you for being a Coop member and for supporting ITC!



Merry Christmas from all of us at ITC!

IP VS. HOME ADDRESS

By Michael Martinell, Network Broadband Technician

Imagine settling onto your couch, snacks ready, excited to watch your favorite show. You turn on your streaming service, only to be greeted by an error. For some reason, it thinks you're not at home. The channels you expect either aren't available or, worse, nothing works. When you contact the streaming company, they insist you're in another town or even another state. They may even blame it on your "IP address changing," even though it probably hasn't.

At ITC, your IP address usually stays the same for long periods of time. While it can occasionally change, just like with most Internet providers, this isn't a frequent occurrence. And if you've purchased a static IP address, it won't change at all.

Why Does This Happen?

Streaming services use a technology called geolocation to estimate your location based on your IP address. This helps them manage regional content restrictions and broadcasting rights, and prevents people from using VPNs to appear in other locations. Essentially, they're making sure they're following their contracts with broadcasters.

It's worth remembering that misidentification isn't a sign that something is broken on your end. Think of it like a map with blurry lines. Your location might be in the right region, but it's not exact. Minor errors in geolocation can affect which shows appear available and other streaming issues.

Behind the scenes, your streaming service relies on outside companies that specialize in mapping IP addresses to locations. These providers maintain large databases that estimate where users are connecting from. Even major providers report city-level accuracy rates of only 36–62%, and in rural areas, accuracy can drop even further. In other words, even the most trusted sources aren't always correct.

In our own testing, we've seen members misidentified in places as varied as Sioux Falls, Minneapolis, or even Texas. All without even leaving home.

The takeaway? There is no reliable method for streaming services to match an IP address to your exact home address. It's simply not what the technology was designed to do. It can usually figure out your country, often your state, and sometimes your nearest city. But beyond that, it's just an estimate.

At ITC, we're actively helping where we can. Based on feedback from members like you, we submit updates to the major geolocation providers to improve accuracy. Results can vary since each company updates its records differently, but we continue to advocate on your behalf and take the steps needed to improve location data.

Our goal at ITC is simple: to help you spend less time troubleshooting and more time streaming. Any questions on geolocation, please call ITC at 1.800.417.8667.

BLAST WI-FI

By Holly Stormo, Marketing Communications Specialist

Bring home the ultimate Internet experience this holiday season. For whatever you want to do online, Blast Wi-Fi makes it better. With faster, consistent Internet everywhere in your home, there's more to be thankful for this holiday season.

Here are some ways you can use the Blast Wi-Fi app for this holiday season:

- **Guest Network** - There may be times when you have guests in your home who want Internet access. If you have the Blast Wi-Fi app, you can set up a guest network without sharing your primary Wi-Fi information.
- **Parental Controls** - With family coming to visit, you can use the Blast Wi-Fi app to restrict certain content or pause Internet for certain devices.
- **Prioritize your Internet** - If you have people staying at your house, you can prioritize certain devices to improve your Internet connection. This would be good for those who work from home.

To learn more about Blast Wi-Fi or see tutorial videos on how to do some of the things mentioned above, go to www.itc-web.com/blast-wi-fi. ITC hopes you have the best Internet experience this holiday season!

POWER OUTAGES

If you have a power outage, your ITC telephone service will continue to work with your wired (not cordless) telephone using battery power. This battery power comes from the ITC-installed power supply at your home. Voice service on a backup battery is expected to last at least eight hours on standby power. The backup battery should provide at least six hours of talk time. If you feel more time is needed, consider extending your standby power up to 24 hours by purchasing additional eight-hour batteries from our company for \$364.95. If you have any questions, please contact our office at 1.800.417.8667.



**Have a very Merry
Christmas and a Happy
New Year!**

*ITC will be closed at noon on
December 24 and all day on
December 25, 26, and January 1.*