

**OFFICE CLOSED:**

NOV 11 | Veterans Day

NOV 27, 28 | Thanksgiving

DEC 24, 25 | Christmas

JAN 1 | New Years

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TRANSITIONING TO PINS

WHY WE ARE MAKING THIS CHANGE

Phone scams are frequent and AcenTek wants you to stay safe. That is why we are switching away from using the last four digits of customers' social security numbers as an identifier. Now, customers who contact the office for any reason will be asked to choose a PIN (Personal Identification Number) and that will replace the last four digits of their social security numbers in our files. An identifier is used to confirm that we are speaking with the correct party before making the requested changes to the account. The new PIN can consist of 4-12 digits or letters. Customers will also have the option of choosing security questions instead of a PIN or using both.

With so many scams and instances of fraud, AcenTek is working to minimize the sensitive information that can be obtained from our records. We also urge you to do your part. Stay cautious when receiving a call. If you are suspicious about the information that is being requested over the phone, hang up and contact that party by dialing them directly. When your call is answered, explain the call just received, and ask for confirmation that it was them calling. Taking this step will prevent you from providing personal information to the wrong party.

THINK TWICE BEFORE STORING YOUR CREDIT CARDS ONLINE



Ever save your payment information in your browser for faster checkout when shopping online? Doing this saves you some time but could end up costing you in the end. Did you know that adding your credit card info in a browser, like Chrome, may put you at risk of having your information stolen? If a hacker can get into one account, they may use that same information to get into others.

AcenTek recommends the following to keep you safe online:

- Do not store credit cards online.
- Enter multifactor authentication (MFA) to add a layer of security. This means you will enter a text code or fingerprint scan before purchases are approved.
- Set up alerts with your bank so you are notified when purchases are made.
- Use unique, complex passwords. Never reuse passwords for multiple accounts.

PLAYING IT SAFE

Whether it is an encounter with a snake, a fire, or a medical emergency, AcenTek wants their staff to stay safe. Being safe often starts with understanding the dangers and being prepared. Employees at AcenTek take 24 safety classes per year, and these classes have proved to be very valuable.

Employees find that the safety training they receive has been useful both at work and in their personal lives. One employee used what he learned in CPR training to save his infant son. Another quickly applied what he learned about fire extinguishers as the garbage truck he was following ignited in flames. He helped to contain the fire until the fire department arrived at the scene. Several outside crew members have encountered snakes and knew just how to navigate the situation based on what they learned in safety training.

Requiring safety classes benefits the organization as staff learn best practices which can result in fewer injuries and accidents. The individuals also benefit from gaining this knowledge as it not only applies to their time at work but can be used in their personal lives. Many employees have had both on-the-job and personal experiences where this training has proved to be an asset.

The Minnesota Telecom Alliance (MTA) suggests safety training topics for AcenTek staff and then an instructor comes to teach the sessions. There is a rotation of topics, however, some subjects must be reviewed annually. Some of the topics include fire extinguisher training, bloodborne pathogens, confined spaces, asbestos and hearing conservation. Other topics, such as CPR, are taught every other year.

Besides the safety training which employees attend, cybersecurity training is also required for our staff. Just like safety training, this information is beneficial both within the company and for individuals in their personal life. Knowing how to stay safe online or learning best practices for creating passwords are skills that benefit us long after the workday ends. Many AcenTek employees have identified email scams and avoided personal catastrophe because of what they learned during their cybersecurity training. We are fortunate to have this training offered at AcenTek. These stories prove just how valuable these classes are.



Our cable inspector, Cory, with his son, who benefited from having a dad who knew CPR.



Our technician, Tim, assists with containing flames when a garbage truck he was following starts on fire.



Our technician, Tad, knew just what to do when he met an unwanted visitor while working on a pedestal.

OUT IN THE COMMUNITY

We care about the communities we serve, which is why we love getting involved. In late May, our Allendale team spent the afternoon volunteering at the Outdoor Discovery Center in Holland. Staff grabbed rakes and saws and began cleaning up Imagination Forest. They planted shrubs, ground cover and perennials at the administration building. The afternoon of team building was a wonderful way of giving back to an organization that AcenTek proudly supports.



Staff from our Allendale office helped clean up and do a bit of landscaping at Outdoor Discovery Center in Holland in May.



Scott Flanders, Business Services Consultant, cheers on Nolan as he plays cornhole at our booth during Summerfest.

In early August, AcenTek had a booth at Summerfest in Coopersville. This provided a fantastic opportunity for us to interact with the community. We brought our cornhole game and rewarded those who stopped by to play. This event provided us a chance to answer questions about AcenTek and have a little fun while doing it.



McKenzie Lamb, Marketing Specialist, shows off our booth at the Back-to-School Fair in Allendale.



Peyton, a local balloon artist, added some fun to our Back-to-School booth. Check out the monkey Alexis left our booth with.



Also in August, we participated in the back-to-school event at Allendale Middle School. This event is to kick off the new school year by reminding families of area businesses and resources. Our booth offered attendees information about our services and provided them with a chance to win a pair of Beats headphones. We had a balloon artist at our booth to help attract those in attendance. Safe to say, a wonderful time was had by all.

Staff at our Mesick office have also been out in the community. Employees joined the Adopt-A-Highway program, committing to taking care of roughly 2 miles along M-37 which runs right in front of our office building. Their commitment started in July when the group ventured out to make a noticeable difference to that stretch of road by picking up trash and debris. AcenTek feels passionate about playing a positive role in the community and this is proof.



On the roadside and in the ditches, staff at our Mesick office worked diligently to keep M-37, which runs right in front of our office, nice and clean.

RIDDLE ME THIS:

I'm invisible,
but I connect your
home to the world.
I travel at the speed
of light, but I'm not a
plane or a car.
I'm stronger when the
weather can't touch me.
What am I?

I live on your phone but
watch over your house.
With me, every device is
quiet as a mouse.
I manage the screens
and the Wi-Fi with care,
so kids stay safe when
they're surfing out there.
What am I?

I have the speed
you brag about,
fast enough to
stream every show
at once.
Gamers love me.
What am I?

I answer when
you call, I help
when you write.
I guide you to solutions
morning or night.
I am not a robot, but
a real human who cares.
Who am I?

I bring the cables,
the tools and the
gear. To make your
service run smoothly
all year. From houses
to businesses, I'm on
the go. Who am I?



CALL BEFORE YOU DIG


An essential step in any project is to call 8-1-1 before you dig. Not only can this step help prevent injury and costly repairs, but it is also required in most states, so significant fines can occur if you don't. When you make the call, participating utility companies will send locators out to mark underground lines. Flags will be placed to mark these important lines that should not be disturbed during your project.

Call when you are doing any project, big or small. If you are planning to put up a sign, post a new mailbox, replace a deck or patio, plant trees or shrubs, do a little landscaping, install a fence or work on an addition to your home, make the call. You will be glad you did.

 **RED:** Electric


 **BLUE:** Water

 **ORANGE:** Communication

 **PINK:** Temporary survey markings

 **GREEN:** Sewer

 **PURPLE:** Undrinkable water, irrigation

 **YELLOW:** Gas, oil, petroleum

 **WHITE:** Excavation



Outside Plant Equipment Operator, Hunter, runs a boring machine to prepare for fiber insertion.

AN UPDATE ON OUR FIBER WORK

Earlier this year we started working on our fiber project in rural Copemish. Construction of the mainline was completed in July. Since then, crews have been busy placing drops from the mainline to each home. This part of the process finished recently. With construction complete, splicing took place. It is estimated that customers in the rural Copemish will start enjoying the benefits of a fiber connection before the end of October.

We are also working on bringing fiber to several subdivisions in the area. In Allendale, Woodford Farms (64th Street) and Waters Edge Condos (off Hidden Shores) will be served by AcenTek fiber. The first phase of a new expansion is also taking place at Boulder Ridge in Allendale.

In Coopersville, there is a small subdivision on 60th Street which will be served by our fiber. And the Reserve is in Phase 2 of expansion. AcenTek is excited to serve these homes. And in Holland, we are putting service in the Fairway View expansion in Macatawa Legends. AcenTek is excited to be bringing fiber services to so many new area developments.



Josh Bergakker, our Outside Plant Coordinator/Splicer pulls duct work where fiber will be inserted.



Josh prepares the hole for connecting the duct work.



Combination Tech, Ron Aten, prepares to hook up a home to fiber by connecting it through the box on the exterior of the home.



*It's easy to choose
'Update later' but
did you know that
delaying the update
can be very
dangerous?*

THE DANGER OF UPDATING LATER

Have you ever seen the prompt on your computer that gives you the option of updating now or updating later? It's easy to delay the update so you can keep doing what you are doing. But waiting until later to update can be very dangerous.

Updates are released to fix flaws in software. Flaws are what hackers look for as their way in. That is why updates are essential in keeping hackers from accessing your information. If you want to keep your home safe from intruders, you would not leave your windows and doors unlocked. Similarly, by delaying updates you are leaving your software vulnerable to hacking. Running outdated software makes it easy for a hacker to get in. Since many of us delay installing updates, this is where a hacker would first attempt access. This is the primary entry point for major threats like ransomware and data breaches.

Is there anything that doesn't need to be updated? No, not really. Windows, macOS, Linux and even your smartphones (both Android and iOS) need updates periodically. When browsing online, Chrome, Firefox and Edge browsers are often targeted.

Even smart TV's, smart plugs, printers and webcams connected to Wi-Fi will need occasional updates.

So how do you keep up? If so many devices in your home need updates, it may seem overwhelming when you think about keeping them all updated. The best defense is to enable automatic updates on your devices. Check your phone, router and computer settings to verify that automatic updates are enabled. This allows you to set it and forget it.

TIP: Most updates don't fully apply to the device until it is rebooted. That is why it is important to shut down your device daily, or at least weekly, to ensure that updates occur.

When you find yourself feeling annoyed or inconvenienced by the prompt to install an update, don't delay. A cyber-attack would be far more inconvenient and troublesome than the time it takes for an update. Dedicate five minutes to check your most used devices today.

REFER A FRIEND

to AcenTek and you
both earn a \$50 credit
on your account when
they become our customer.

Visit [ACENTEK.NET](https://www.acentek.net)
to learn more





Heather Devereaux (middle), Executive Director at Bridget's House accepts donation from AcenTek employees, Lisa Phillips (left) and Amy Hehl (right).

GIVING BACK

In early October, staff helped fight against the hidden homelessness that exists right in Allendale by making a \$600 donation to Bridget's House. Bridget's House is dedicated to helping women and children who are experiencing homelessness. They offer a safe and supportive home where women and children are provided with the resources, guidance, and support they need to regain independence and stability. The Casual Day donation from our Allendale staff will be used to help feed the families currently living at Bridget's House.

At AcenTek, we know how crucial internet access is in today's world. In our increasingly digital society, connectivity is not just a luxury, it's a vital tool for success that we often take for granted. That is why we are thrilled that Bridget's House chose us to provide these incredible women and children with reliable, high-speed internet service.

This impact is far-reaching. For the children living at Bridget's House, access to the internet means the ability to complete schoolwork, connect with teachers, and tap into online learning resources that can help them excel academically. In many cases, reliable internet is key to keeping up with school assignments and finding resources that would otherwise be out of reach.

For the mothers at Bridget's House, internet access opens doors to valuable resources and a sense of security. Whether

it is looking for employment opportunities, connecting with support services, or attending online workshops and training, reliable internet is an important tool that enables them to take the next steps toward rebuilding their lives. They can feel safe rebuilding in Bridget's House knowing that AcenTek's internet is helping them provide security through video and emergency monitoring systems, the most basic yet vital element of families feeling SAFE. This is something we take for granted every day, but for families facing homelessness it's a luxury to have. In addition, many of these women are using the internet to reconnect with family and friends, offering them the support system they need as they transition into a new chapter.

What makes this connection even more special is that AcenTek was able to connect Bridget's House to the internet quickly and efficiently, ensuring they have the tools they need to make an immediate difference. It's part of our mission to help the community, and we're proud to have played a role in supporting such an inspiring mission to empower families in need in our community.

This is just the beginning. We are committed to continuing to work with Bridget's House to provide connectivity that helps empower families. Together, we are helping to build a stronger, more connected Allendale community.



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MESICK OFFICE:
5351 M-37, Mesick, MI

ALLENDALE OFFICE:
6568 Lake Michigan Drive, Allendale, MI

**OFFICES
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WHAT'S IT MEAN TO YOU?

"Here when you need us" is a common mantra at AcenTek. But what does it mean *to you*?



It means 24/7 support.

Our Customer Support team is available around the clock to take your call. They are here to help you, whatever you need.



It means local technicians.

If you have an issue with your services, we come. Our team of technicians live in the communities we serve so we can respond quickly when you need us most.



It means talking to a person.

When you call, we'll answer. We understand how important it is for you to talk to a person when you have questions or need help. Our Customer Service team looks forward to helping you.



It means staying connected.

We are busy behind the scenes, making sure all your services work. Our Network Operations team manages the performance of our infrastructure.