

June 10, 2003

## **New Canaan Library**

### **Computer and Internet Use Policies**

#### **New Canaan Library Mission Statement**

**The New Canaan Library promotes and serves the individuals right to know and encourages personal pursuit of knowledge by providing free and convenient access to books and other resources for information, education, and the enrichment of life.**

**Adopted November 8, 1994**

Thanks to the Internet and other computer-based resources, patrons of the New Canaan Library can now access a far richer collection of materials than previously imaginable or affordable.

The New Canaan Library is committed to providing its patrons with access to an increasing array of computer resources. In return, we ask that each patron act responsibly and not do anything that detrimentally affects other patrons' access. This policy statement spells out some specific "do's and don'ts."

Our computer and Internet resources (computers, software, related equipment, on-line access and databases) are funded through limited governmental and charitable sources. Computers differ fundamentally from print media in their expense, capabilities, and fragility.

#### **GUIDELINES FOR USE OF INTERNET FACILITIES:**

##### **INTERNET RESOURCES**

In general, Library patrons should use the Internet for purposes appropriate to the Mission of the Library.

The user, not the Library, ultimately selects the materials to view. Patrons are advised that:

- The Library does not verify information on the Internet. Patrons should be aware that errors and intentional misinformation do occur regularly. The New Canaan Library makes no warranty, expressed or implied, of the fitness, timeliness, accuracy, or usefulness of information accessed via the Internet.
- The Internet contains material that some patrons will find offensive. There are sites that are unacceptable for use or viewing in a public library setting, and some sites are extremely inappropriate for children.
- The Library will make reasonable efforts to exclude from its own websites links to sites with obscene content, but websites change continuously and without notice, so guarantees are not possible. Furthermore, links on other websites are generally not reviewed or approved by the Library. Patrons on Library computers will be notified when they are no longer viewing the Library web site.

## INTERNET ACCESS

Because some material accessible on the Internet is extremely ill suited to children, the Library computers in the Children's Room and identified computers in the Lapham Wing are subject to software filtering of Internet sites. This software does not always work reliably. Material inappropriate for children may still be accessible and materials appropriate for children may be inaccessible. Neither the Library nor its staff undertake oversight obligations with respect to minors in this regard. Parents who allow their minor children to use computers at the Library assume the risk that inappropriate sites will be accessible.

Filtering software may also block sites that should be available to adults. For this reason, other Library computers are *not* equipped with filtering software. These computers are marked for use by persons 18 or over. Parents who want their minor (i.e. 17 and under) children to be able to use these computers should sign a permission and responsibility agreement. Library staff may occasionally, on a time-available basis, check to see whether any persons using unfiltered computers who are apparently minors have this agreement. *However, patrons should be aware that the Library takes no responsibility for the consistency, timeliness, or results of these efforts. Parents are solely responsible for the actions of their minor children within the Library.*

Unfiltered wireless access to the Library network and the Internet is offered in the Lapham Wing and the Children's Room. Patrons, including minors, who bring their own computers to the Library may use them, and may connect to the unfiltered wireless network, subject to the usage guidelines below. The Library will also loan laptop computers to patrons for use within the Library. When loaned to minors these laptops will have Internet filtering software activated.

## GUIDELINES FOR USE OF COMPUTER FACILITIES IN GENERAL:

Library computer resources may only be used for legal and ethical purposes and in a cooperative manner. Examples of uses not permitted include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Damage to equipment, software, or data.
- Unauthorized copying of copyrighted material or violation of software licenses.
- Spreading computer viruses; unreasonable use of processing capacity, connect time or bandwidth, information storage space, or printing facilities; deliberately crashing any computer.
- Disruption or unauthorized monitoring of electronic communications; use of any Library computer to “crack” or “hack” Library or other systems; violation of computer system security; unauthorized use of computer accounts, access codes, or network identifiers assigned to others; violation of another user’s privacy, including attempts to read another person’s files; harassment of other users.
- Use of sounds and visuals which might reasonably be disruptive to others; libel or slander; sending, receiving, or displaying obscene text or graphics.
- Activities for profit, including advertising, “spamming” (i.e. commercial e-mail) or chain letters.
- Downloading files to a hard drive other than to the designated “Public Access” folder.
- Use of any executable software programs.
- Parents should warn their minor children never to disclose personal information in chat rooms or other electronic communications without specific parental consent.

The Library reserves the right to limit the time patrons use the Internet.

## PRIVACY

While the library adopts reasonable efforts and policies to improve the privacy of patrons, users should be aware that workstations, servers, and Internet Service Providers often record the actions of users. Furthermore, legislation (including the USA Patriot Act) may obligate the Library to release records to governmental authorities without regard to Library policies. The Library therefore cannot ensure user’s privacy.

### VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES:

The Library reserves the right to terminate any computer use or Internet session at any time for violation of these guidelines. Repeated violations may lead to the suspension or revocation of Library access to computers, the Internet and its resources. Users (or the parents of users, in the case of minors) who damage Library equipment (including introducing viruses) will be expected to pay for repairs or replacement of the equipment, including reasonable charges for staff time, before user privileges are reinstated.

### POLICY CHANGES:

Due to the emerging nature of these services, this policy is subject to change at the discretion of the New Canaan Library Board.

Adopted by the Board of Trustees, January 13, 1998.

Adopted and revised by the Board of Trustees June 10, 2003.

**NEW CANAAN LIBRARY**  
**INTERNET USAGE AGREEMENT**  
**AND**  
**PARENT PERMISSION FORM**  
**FOR MINORS**

I wish my minor child,  
(please print name clearly) \_\_\_\_\_  
to have unsupervised access to unfiltered terminals at the New Canaan Library.

I understand that some materials on the Internet are objectionable and extremely ill-suited to minors. I understand and have read the library's Internet Usage Policy. I accept sole responsibility for my child's usage of the Internet and observance of Library Policy.

I waive any claims against the Library, its directors and employees related to my child's use of the Internet. In addition, I agree to indemnify the New Canaan Library, its directors and employees, and to hold them harmless from any claims that may be made by anyone which may arise from my child's use of the Internet at the New Canaan Library.

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_