



1221 North Russell St
Missoula, MT 59808

PRSRT STD
US Postage
PAID
Missoula, MT 59801
Permit No. 569



Control your
Home WiFi
from anywhere
in the world.

Blackfoot Member
1221 North Russell St
Missoula, MT 59808

Download the app today!
GoBlackfoot.com/SmartHome

A Message From Jason Williams

BLACKFOOT CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Dear Cooperative Member,

Season's Greetings! Regardless of what has occurred throughout the year, I always take time throughout the holiday season to practice gratitude—I'm grateful for my family, friends, living in Western Montana, and leading the more than 180 amazing employees that work for Blackfoot! We have been busier than ever, turning up service for more than 500 new cooperative members. In addition, we installed more than 220 miles of new fiber-optic infrastructure, primarily in the Trout Creek/Thompson Falls and Mission Valley areas. As we head into 2022, we plan to finish up those areas and move on to the Plains/Paradise area, with the goal of upgrading all of our cooperative service areas to fiber-based broadband services in the coming

years. We are currently exploring opportunities to secure federal and state broadband grant funding to accelerate our fiber build out across the cooperative areas. Fingers crossed that the COVID pandemic will be far enough behind us that we can hold our Annual Meeting in person on April 30, 2022. I hope to see you there.



*Wishing you a
Merry Christmas and
a Happy New Year!*



COOPERATIVE CONNECTION

WINTER 2021 NEWSLETTER

2021 in the Rear-View Mirror



As we usher in a new year, it's the perfect time to share our gratitude to our loyal member-owners. The pandemic spotlighted the critical need for access to high quality broadband and your cooperative delivered when it mattered the most, to consumers, schools and businesses. Thanks to your patronage we will continue our aggressive network upgrade plan envisioned to meet the demands of ever-changing technology. We are proud that together, we are helping our communities be great places to live, work and recreate.

HERE ARE FOUR WAYS TO STAY CONNECTED & INFORMED YEAR ROUND!

- ✓ Sign up for a **monthly tech tip** email: GoBlackfoot.com/Subscribe
- ✓ Get **network upgrade project** updates: blackfootcommunications.com/networkupgrades
- ✓ Visit with your **local trustee**: boardoftrustees@blackfoot.com
- ✓ Let us know **how we're doing**: customerservice@blackfoot.com

TECH TIP

Be Cyber Secure

Cyber-attacks never stop and neither do we. Our focus centers on detection and innovation to protect our customers 24/7. Here are recommendations for a safe online experience.

- **Avoid public WiFi for online purchases:**
Many public networks are not secure and can expose you to hackers. Don't log on to banking sites using public networks; better safe than sorry!
- **Think before you click:**
Always consider the source before opening emails from an unknown sender and don't click on attachments before you verify the sender.
- **Use strong and unique passwords:**
Creating strong and unique passwords is always the best security practice to protect all your

personal and financial information. Best practice is to ensure your passwords are sufficiently long and complex using a variety of upper and middle case letters and symbols. Consider using a catch phrase that you will remember but hackers won't guess.

- **Use your pop-up blocker:**
A pop-up blocker will minimize your chance of accidentally clicking an infected link.

GET MORE TECH TIPS AT
GoBlackfoot.com/TechTips

Connect with us



Sign up for our monthly email:
GoBlackfoot.com/Subscribe



Community Impact



COMMITTED TO BUSINESSES; BIG & SMALL

Annually, Blackfoot awards scholarships, supports program funding in schools and provides customer learning opportunities. Additionally, we are passionate about helping businesses succeed via our founding sponsorship investment of C2M Beta, a business incubator and our long time support of the John Ruffatto Business Start Up Challenge at the University of Montana. We are proud to lend our resources to help create a vibrant business climate.

SHARING SUCCESS WITH COBANK

In this season of giving, one of our favorite holiday traditions is to sponsor the Granite County Medical Foundations Annual Festival of Trees. Our Blackfoot team of decorators enjoys adorning a beautiful tree and taking part in the festive occasion that benefits the local hospital. This year, the Foundation was one of four local organizations who received funding from CoBank's "Sharing Success" matching grant

program. Congratulations to the other recipients: Clark Fork Valley Hospital Foundation, Mineral Community Medical Foundation and the Seeley Lake Community Foundation! The combined program awards totaled \$16,000.

CoBank is a national cooperative bank, learn more at www.cobank.com



WE GAVE OVER \$360K IN 2021

Need help with *your* community event or to request a donation?
VISIT GoBlackfoot.com/Community

We have your Back 24/7



655+
construction jobs
completed

241+
miles of fiber
constructed

~3 MILLION
emails with
viruses blocked

OUR MISSION:
We connect people, places and businesses



TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

Kris Sweeney: your Business Account Executive.

Tip from Kris: "What is fiber and what are the benefits to my business" is a question I am asked a lot. Fiber is a game changer, the benefits include faster speeds, a more reliable connection and better security. An excellent resource is a quick video available on our website under Customer Learning, check it out!

GoBlackfoot.com/education



ANNUAL MEETING

SAVE THE DATE:

Saturday, April 30th, 2022
Hilton Garden Inn, Missoula

We've missed seeing you!
Join us to celebrate a successful year.