

Celebrate Cybersecurity Awareness Month with Pineland's Cyber Joe!

This October, in honor of Cybersecurity Awareness Month, a new hero is stepping out of the shadows of our Central Office and onto your screens. His name is Cyber Joe, and he's not your ordinary cape-and-mask crusader, he's a cyber defender on a mission to keep our digital world safe!

Armed with lightning-fast reflexes, a shield made of firewalls, and a utility belt packed with strong passwords, Cyber Joe is ready to battle the villains of the internet. Hackers, phishers, and scammers beware! From spotting suspicious links to protecting personal information, Cyber Joe is here to share tips, tricks, and cyber smarts that can keep everyone safe online.



Cyber Joe will be making special appearances all month long on our social media pages with helpful safety reminders. He'll also bring fun to the family with a children's coloring activity with McDonald's gift card awards, so kids can join in the cyber safety adventure too. After all, being safe online is a team effort!

Keep an eye out this October for Cyber Joe and be sure to pick up a kid's coloring activity sheet and entry form from any of our three business offices – Metter, Swainsboro, and Americus. Entries must be returned by October 24th, and will be divided into three age groups, each with a gift card winner. Children must be 12 or under. For questions or to receive a coloring sheet via email, contact us at info@pinelandtelco.com or 800.247.1266.

"Stay Smart. Stay Safe. Stay Super." – Cyber Joe

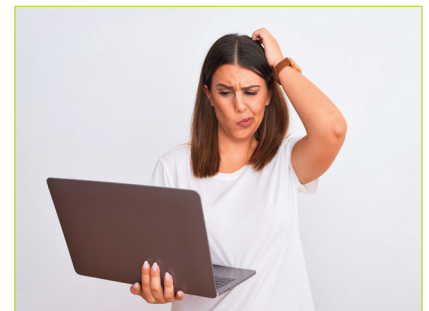
What's with the Maintenance?

You may have noticed we've had an increase in scheduled maintenance, and you're probably wondering what it's all about.

We're upgrading our core routers and switches—the backbone of our network—to deliver faster, more reliable internet, and prepare for future services. These upgrades will strengthen our infrastructure and ensure we can keep up with the growing demands of our customers.

To make these improvements, we will be performing ongoing maintenance as we replace and upgrade critical equipment. Some maintenance may cause temporary service interruptions.

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Any service-affecting maintenance will be carefully scheduled during overnight hours when usage is lowest. We'll also make every effort to notify customers of scheduled maintenance in advance through both email and phone calls. To be sure you receive these updates, we encourage you to confirm that your contact information, especially a valid email address, is current in our records.

These investments in our core network are designed to bring long-term benefits. We appreciate your patience as we prepare our network for the next generation of connectivity.



Protect Your Phone Numbers from Unauthorized Transfers

Your phone number is more valuable than you may think. One growing threat is port-out fraud, where scammers transfer your number to another provider without your knowledge. Once they gain control, they can hijack calls and text messages, often using them to break into financial or online accounts that rely on verification codes.

What is Port-Out Fraud?

Although it happens most often with wireless numbers, landlines can be affected too. In this scam, someone poses as the account holder, opens service with a different carrier, and requests that your number be “ported” away. Once successful, the scammer gains control of your calls and texts, which allows them to bypass two-factor authentication codes, change login credentials, and even lock you out of your own accounts. Because communications are rerouted, victims may not realize what has happened until it is too late. Learn more about this risk by visiting the FCC’s consumer guide: [fcc.gov/port-out-fraud-targets-your-private-accounts](https://www.fcc.gov/port-out-fraud-targets-your-private-accounts).



How to Safeguard Your Number

- Limit personal details you share. Social media posts often reveal answers to security questions (birthdates, pet names, car photos, etc.).
- Be cautious with unexpected calls or texts. If a message or caller seems suspicious, hang up and return the call using a verified number.
- Strengthen account protection. Use strong, unique passcodes that don't rely on easily guessed dates or names. Enable email or text notifications when available.
- Monitor your phone bill. If you notice unexpected changes, contact your provider immediately to confirm the details.

Extra Protection from Pineland

Pineland offers a free Port Freeze option for all accounts, residential and business. With this feature in place, any request to move your number to another provider must first be confirmed directly with you (or your authorized contact) using an account passcode.

To add this protection to your account, call our Customer Experience Associates at **800.247.1266** during regular business hours.