INFORMATION FROM UTILITIES DURING COVID19 EMERGENCY DECLARATION

**AVISTA**

NO UTILITY DISCONNECTIONS    AVISTA OFFICE CLOSURES

<https://www.krem.com/article/news/avista-will-stop-utility-cut-offs-in-washington-idaho-and-oregon-amid-coronavirus-concerns/293-21b38eb6-e215-4d7a-a177-137f828a920c>

Beginning Wednesday, March 18, all Avista offices will be closed to the public and those employees who can work from home will be required to do so.

SPOKANE, Wash. — Avista has stopped all utility disconnects in Washington, Idaho and Oregon amid the growing coronavirus concerns.

 Avista stated that there are currently no confirmed cases among their employees. However, out of concern for their employees and customers all Avista officers will be closed to the public beginning Wednesday March 18.

**COMCAST**

Comcast announced Thursday it will be increasing speeds for the Internet Essentials program, and making the program free to new low-income customers for two months, amid the coronavirus outbreak. In a letter, Comcast President of Consumer Services Dana Strong said that the change is for the millions of low-income Americans who don't have internet service during this uncertain time. It's to help them stay connected to families, workplaces and more. The speeds are increasing from 15 Mbps to 25. Those new customers will get complimentary internet essentials service for 60 days, which is normally available to qualified low-income households for $9.95 per month, and the speeds are increasing for new and existing customers. The speeds will be rolled out nationally over the past few days, and all new customers will be a free self-install kit that includes a cable modem and WiFi router. There is no term contract. To sign up, applicants can simply visit [www.internetessentials.com](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__www.internetessentials.com&d=DwMF-g&c=aLv4kG3eFBuAUFgZFQ07JQ&r=_0q_oyPxPOKHzir28yIm4a3VqcQkd0r0sLtklwMaHs4&m=8XX59XXJMUQyvAaFX-zd4ekxicAWinzC9NuASMuFFvU&s=PKEUelYFM__0krITDZuOOxNkwZ3TMH6ywbRdMnuaP18&e=). The accessible website also includes the option to video chat with customer service agents in American Sign Language. There are also two dedicated phone numbers 1-855-846-8376 for English and 1-855-765-6995 for Spanish. Comcast has also released the following information:

* **Xfinity WiFi Free For Everyone**: Xfinity WiFi hotspots across the country will be available to anyone who needs them for free – including non-Xfinity Internet subscribers. For a map of Xfinity WiFi hotspots, visit [www.xfinity.com/wifi [xfinity.com]](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__www.xfinity.com_wifi&d=DwMFAg&c=aLv4kG3eFBuAUFgZFQ07JQ&r=_0q_oyPxPOKHzir28yIm4a3VqcQkd0r0sLtklwMaHs4&m=VZGJitNCMFOP0nO4vwMgkcRbNuLXakcBPhNYU91a7sU&s=nziYzarsix-C4YE_ikiBH6oiwIQKju-kpUPPP5X6tNY&e=). Once at a hotspot, consumers should select the “xfinitywifi” network name in the list of available hotspots, and then launch a browser.
* **Pausing Our Data Plan**: With so many people working and educating from home, we want our customers to access the internet without thinking about data plans. While the vast majority of our customers do not come close to using 1TB of data in a month, we are pausing our data plans for 60 days giving all customers Unlimited data for no additional charge.
* **No Disconnects or Late Fees**: We will not disconnect a customer’s internet service or assess late fees if they contact us and let us know that they can’t pay their bills during this period. Our care teams will be available to offer flexible payment options and can help find other solutions.
* **Internet Essentials Free to New** **Customers**: As announced yesterday, it’s even easier for low-income families who live in a Comcast service area to sign-up for Internet Essentials, the nation’s largest and most comprehensive broadband adoption program. New customers will receive 60 days of complimentary Internet Essentials service, which is normally available to all qualified low-income households for $9.95/month. Additionally, for all new and existing Internet Essentials customers, the speed of the program’s Internet service was increased to 25 Mbps downstream and 3 Mbps upstream. That increase will go into effect for no additional fee and it will become the new base speed for the program going forward.
* **News, Information and Educational Content on X1 and Flex**: For those with school-age students at home, we’ve created new educational collections for all grade levels in partnership with Common Sense Media. Just say “education” into your X1 or Flex voice remote. To help keep customers informed, we also have created a collection of the most current news and information on Coronavirus. Just say “Coronavirus” into your X1 or Flex voice remote.
* **24x7 Network Monitoring:** Underpinning all of these efforts, Comcast’s technology and engineering teams will continue to work tirelessly to support our network operations. We engineer our network capacity to handle spikes and shifts in usage patterns, and continuously test, monitor and enhance our systems and network to ensure they are ready to support customer usage. Our engineers and technicians staff our network operations centers 24/7 to ensure network performance and reliability. We are monitoring network usage and watching the load on the network both nationally and locally, and to date it is performing well.

<https://www.wxyz.com/news/national/coronavirus/comcast-offering-internet-essentials-package-free-for-60-months-during-coronavirus-outbreak>