Article #91 - Your own Internet access point
Hal Bookbinder

 If you are one of the 95%+ of folks who carry a mobile phone, you likely are also carrying a mobile hotspot, permitting you to connect your laptop or other Wi-Fi enabled device to the Internet, even when out of range of a functioning and accessible Wi-Fi connection.

At 5:40 pm, I discovered that my home Wi-Fi was not functioning, and I was to teach a class at 6:00 pm. I did not know whether my wireless router had failed, or if my Internet Service Provider (ISP) was down and I did not have time to find out. Instead, I activated the "hotspot" on my iPhone, connected my desktop through it to the Internet, and was able to teach the class.

The hotspot feature on your iPhone or Android device uses the phone's data plan to connect to the Internet, and provides a Wi-Fi connection that your laptop, desktop, or other Wi-Fi enabled device can use. This then allows for connectivity from any location where there is no Wi-Fi, or where you prefer not to use an available but potentially unsafe Wi-Fi.

To turn on the mobile hotspot on your iPhone, click "Settings". If "Cellular" is off, click it and turn it on. Then, choose "Personal hotspot" and "Allow Others to Join". You will notice that your iPhone's name (in the form of "xxxxx'x iPhone") along with your Wi-Fi Password are displayed. Although you may want to do so, you need not turn off your phone's Wi-Fi connection.

To turn on the mobile hotspot on your Samsung Android, click "Settings", choose "Connections" and then "Mobile hotspot and Tethering". Now, turn on your "Mobile hotspot". It will note that you must turn off Wi-Fi. Acknowledge this and tap "Mobile hotspot" once more to see the Network Name and Password.

Display available networks on any nearby desktop, laptop, or other Wi-Fi enabled device and you will see the Network Name that is displayed on your iPhone or Android. Select it and enter the password. The device will connect via Wi-Fi to your smart phone and through it to the Internet. Practice this to ensure you are ready when needed.

Once you no longer need to provide Internet access through your smartphone, it is good practice to turn off the hotspot. It is also good practice to have a complex hotspot password that is not easily guessable. Since it will display on your smartphone, you need not remember it. Be aware that you may be charged for data usage that exceeds your monthly limit.

 Separate topic: The lock symbol provides a false sense of security. It only means that encryption is turned on and not, as many believe, that the site is safe. Read this article about Google's plans to retire the lock symbol, and why encryption does not equal safety. https://www.pcmag.com/news/google-to-kill-chromes-lock-icon-now-considered-outdated-and-misleading