SaskTel News

Voice Mail Fraud

Voice mail has become an everyday communication tool for business and residential customers alike.

Criminal minds have found that poorly protected voice mail boxes, primarily medium to large businesses, can be used to make long distance calls all over the world.

This method of fraud uses the "through-dialing" feature that legitimately enables corporate employees to make long distance calls from outside of the business by calling into their office voice mail. This can run into the thousands of dollars of unauthorized long distance calls for which the company would remain responsible because it is their own system which created the opportunity for the fraud.

Residential users are far less vulnerable to hacking attempts because few have access to the "through-dialing" feature.

How it works:

The hacker calls a business after hours and uses the automated voice mail service to search for inadequately protected mailboxes. The hacker is looking for mailboxes which have simple or "default" passwords.

Though there are many different voice mail systems, the prompting patterns can be used by the hacker to determine which system is in place.

The hacker then determines the "default" password for

that system, and it is just a matter of time until they come across a mailbox that they can access.

Users need to keep in mind that the password for their voice mail is the primary security method to protect their mailbox from being hacked. The "default" password should be immediately changed.

Passwords like "1111", "1234","9999" or the last four digits of the telephone number should never be used. Also be aware that using real words related to the numbers on the keypad is also unsafe.

Sask 1st Call: Dial Before You Dig

For free cable locates before you dig, contact Sask 1st Call at 1-866-828-4888.

The cable path will be marked, but SaskTel cannot guarantee the cable depth since ground cover may have been removed by past work or by erosion.

Requests must be made at least 48 hours in advance of the work start date so the locate can be scheduled.

Locates are only valid for ten working days after which a new locate request must be submitted. Removal of the marking flags after the completion of the work is the responsibility of the person or company requesting the cable locate.

SaskTel appreciates your cooperation to help prevent cable damages.

SaskTel
Your Life. Connected.

Know Your Short Codes: Premium Text Messaging

Text messaging short codes are unique numbers that are associated with a particular brand or campaign.

Premium text messages, or short codes, are numbers to which a text message can be sent. They are typically shorter than the ten digit wireless phone numbers used to send text messages from one individual to another.

A text message addressed to a short code is received by a web-based application instead of another cellular number. These text messages allow customers to receive specialized content and participate in interactive promotions and games.

Common short codes are generally associated with a particular brand or campaign and are common for all Canadian carriers.

While some short codes are free to use, such as SaskTel's short code 43210, many carry premium charges over and above a customer's regular text messaging package.

Charges are billed through the subscriber's cellular carrier. The amount charged is up to the program provider to decide and customers are informed of the price of sending a text to the short code when the campaign is promoted. Customers will also be notified of the additional charge before sending an entry to a premium number.

Customers who subscribe to monthly subscriptions that send a "Joke a Day" or answers from "Ask Me Now" can

range in price from $.50 to $5.00 for messages sent or received, to a maximum of $40.00 per month per subscription.

Short code users can "opt-out" from a shortcode by texting 'STOP' to the shortcode. Other opt-out words may be identified at the time of subscription which may include: CANCEL, TERMINATE or END. If this is not successful, please contact SaskTel.

Terms and conditions for each individual short code program can generally be found through the short code provider's website. Current short code programs being offered and links to information about each program, including how to subscribe to or stop service, can be found at www.txt.ca.

Wire Watch & Inside Wire

SaskTel would like to remind our customers that we provide basic telephone service to a single point in a premise and that the premise owners are responsible for the cost and maintenance of their inside wiring.

Customers must ensure all telephone wiring and jacks are CSA (Canadian Standards Association) approved and placement of all wire conforms to the Canadian Electrical Code. On construction of all new single dwelling buildings, customers are responsible for providing an access hole from the inside of their premise to the area near the power meter, the ground wire from the main building grounding system to the main telephone service connection box, and a wooden backboard for the mounting of the telephone service connection box, if required.

Wire Watch® is an optional maintenance plan for SaskTel single line residential subscribers covering the "simple wire" portion of inside wire and jacks in residential homes.

For more information please call SaskTel, toll-free, at 1-800-727-5835. Wire Watch® service (a Registered Trademark of Manitoba Telecom Services Inc.)