SaskTel News

Computers For Schools 20th Anniversary

For twenty years, SaskTel and the SaskTel Pioneers have been providing Saskatchewan's schools, public libraries and not-for-profit learning organizations with thousands of computers in an award-winning program that has tremendous benefits for both education and the environment.

Computers for Schools (CFS) was launched by Industry Canada and the Telecom Pioneers in 1993. Receiving donations of computers and printers from the public and private sector, SaskTel Pioneers who volunteer under CFS repair and refurbish them at two repair centres provided by SaskTel. In addition, CFS runs a Technical Work

Experience Program workshop in La Ronge, where surplus computers are cleaned, refurbished and prepared for delivery to the province's northern communities. The La Ronge workshop employs northern youth in an internship program that provides graduates and students of Information Technology with short terms of practical work experience.

Don Taylor, an IT consultant employed by File Hills Tribal Council, has seen CFS computers transform schools on seven First Nations: "Before we got on with Computers For Schools three years ago, we had computers but 75% of them were not running. CFS has allowed us to get computers into the hands of a lot more children in schools where the IT budgets are very small."

For information on how your organization can donate to the program or apply for refurbished computers, visit www.cfs-sask.ca.

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.

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Cellular Safety

Wireless devices or cellular phones have become fairly common over the past few years. Like the internet, the "trend" has faded and they have become useful communications tools in our everyday lives. Also like the internet, here are some safety guidelines to make your wireless experience more enjoyable.

When you're on the road, safe driving is your primary responsibility. SaskTel is very much aware of the issue of cellular phone use and safety. However, cell phone use while driving is just one component of a larger safety issue related to driver distraction.

SaskTel has taken positive steps to educate drivers on the appropriate use of cell phones through education and awareness programs. Under current legislation, police can charge drivers whose use of cellular phones is affecting their ability to drive safely, with "driving without due care and attention."

Using your wireless device is only one of many potential distractions while driving. Your attention can also be distracted by eating, drinking, personal grooming, lighting cigarettes, changing radio stations, CDs or cassettes, and attending to children. To minimize distractions that may be caused by using your wireless phone in a vehicle, please keep the following in mind:

Avoid emotional or stressful conversations. Pull out of the traffic lane if you must answer. Use a hands-free set so that you can keep both hands on the wheel. Voice-activated dialing is a built-in feature on some digital wireless phones. If it is available on your phone, use this feature to dial phone numbers using your voice instead of your fingers. Let Voice Message Service take messages for you. If you have a passenger, ask them to dial, take messages or answer calls for you. Be a wireless Samaritan. Call 911 for emergency services (police, fire and ambulance), and provide the location of the emergency to the dispatch personnel.

Your wireless device can be secured by using the locking feature provided with most devices. Manufacturers may use slightly different processes to engage this feature. When you activate the lock feature, your wireless phone remains locked until the unlock code is entered, even when you turn the power off. For more information on locking your phone, check with your SaskTel Authorized Dealer or SaskTel Store, or refer to your wireless phone manual.

Avoid giving important numbers over your wireless phone, such as your calling card, bank account or credit card numbers. If you give one of these numbers to a live operator, someone scanning frequencies could hear it. Or, if you enter them on your keypad, someone could record the sounds of the digits and translate them.

If your wireless phone is lost or stolen, report it to SaskTel at 1-800-667-CELL (2355) immediately. SaskTel will suspend the phone's wireless service. If your wireless phone is stolen, report it to your local police. The police will provide you with a file or docket number on the case and this file number can be passed on to SaskTel to have the wireless number registered as stolen throughout North America.

If your wireless bill lists calls you think were not placed or received by your wireless phone, report it to SaskTel immediately. Call 1-800-667-CELL (2355) or *811 from your SaskTel wireless phone. Your customer representative will investigate the problem and report any suspicion of fraud.

Wire Watch® and 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.)

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