SaskTel News

Internet Protection

The internet is both an invaluable resource for many SaskTel customers and a source of uninvited malicious software such as viruses, Trojan downloader worms, or spyware, and that is simply an inescapable reality for internet users worldwide. Viruses have become more sophisticated and were primarily delivered through email, while the internet itself is now the launching pad. Once installed, many of them can be automatically executed and create effects that range from annoying pop-up windows, to serious damage to software, or even the operating system of the computer itself.

When using email, we would suggest that you not open any email where you do not recognize the sender. If the email appears to be in a strange language or jumbled characters, extra letters thrown into words, or has an unknown and or an unsolicited attachment or extension, especially with a .VBS, .EXE, .SIS or .PIF extension - do not open it and delete it immediately.

Please be aware that other file extensions or a variety of attached files may also carry viruses. Additionally, you should never accept unsolicited downloads through on-line chat systems like ICQ, IRC, AOL, MSN Instant Messenger, or Peer to Peer applications such as Bit Torrent. Be aware that if you participate in file-sharing, many of these files could be delivering a virus to your computer or even your mobile phone.

SaskTel highly recommends that users regularly update anti-virus and anti-spyware programs. Windows users need to ensure that updates and critical security patches are applied, especially if you are using Outlook Express or Microsoft Outlook as your email program.

Security is a priority at SaskTel. The "Support" section of our website, at www.sasktel.com, provides information about new email threats and other security issues as they may arise.

Know Your Long Distance Plan

SaskTel reminds our customers that unlimited long distance plans apply to 'voice' calls only. 'Data' calls are not eligible for savings or discounts and will be charged at regular long distance rates.

A data call is any non-voice call, typically between electronic equipment, such as a fax transmission, or dialing any long distance internet service provider other than SaskTel. This includes calls from your modem at home, or dialing into a remote internet account.

It is also important to remember that when you download data from a web site for which long distance charges apply, you are responsible for those charges. Customers should also pay special attention to any dial-up internet usage to avoid unnecessary charges. It can be as simple as ensuring you log off of the internet when you have completed surfing, since internet charges continue as long as the dial-up internet connection is left on.

If you would like information on long distance plans please call 1-800-727-5835.

SaskTel

Voice Mail & Telemarketing 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. Residential users are far less vulnerable to hacking attempts because few have access to the "through-dialing" feature. Though this is not a new fraudulent activity, the number of instances was on the rise once again earlier this year, and can run into the thousands of dollars of unauthorized long distance calls.

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, then it's 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.

This spring some SaskTel customers received calls announcing that they had won a Cruise, or were being offered exceptional credit card rates, and were asked to push a number to get details. Dialing the number suggested may result in third party billing charges on your phone bill, usually ranging between $4.99 to $5.99 a minute, by an out of country provider. As well, these calls were spoofing a Saskatchewan number for the call display, leading customers to believe that these were local calls. These are not legitimate calls. SaskTel continues to work closely with Bell and other telephone providers to resolve these types of telemarketing scams as quickly as possible. If you receive this type of call you should hang up immediately. Do not press any further numbers and do not redial or attempt to call the number back. SaskTel recommends that customers never dial a number that they do not recognize. Customers can register a complaint regarding a telephone or fax telemarketing call: online at http://www.LNNTE-DNCL.gc.ca or by phone at 1-866-580-3625.

Another SaskTel offering is the Voice Mail to Text service for our wireless customers. When the service is added to an account, the current cellular number is the default destination for the text version of the voice mail. If you change your wireless phone number in the future, please remember to update your Voice Mail To Text destination number to ensure that you receive your Voice Mail To Text conversions. It is the responsibility of the customer to manage their personal voice mail service, and to change destination numbers and passwords.

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. It is the responsibility of the person or company requesting the cable locate to remove marking flags after the completion of the work. SaskTel appreciates your cooperation to help prevent cable damages.

Toll-Free Numbers

SaskTel would like to remind you that only numbers with the prefix 800, 866, 877, and 888 are toll-free. The prefixes, which are not interchangeable, are used by simply dialing 1, followed by the appropriate prefix, followed by the seven-digit number. Please note that other prefixes, including 809, are not toll-free prefixes and long distance charges will apply on your telephone bill.