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Being Wi-Fi Safe

From coffee shops to the airports and hotels you visit when travelling, public Wi-Fi is available just about everywhere. But even though Wi-Fi has made connecting to the Internet a little easier, there are security risks involved in accessing these networks. Wi-Fi networks can be open to intruders and hackers who are looking to steal the personal information available on our smartphones and laptops.

During such attacks, criminals use a form of eavesdropping to trick unsuspecting victims into connecting to a malicious Wi-Fi network usually by naming the network after the actual public network. The malicious network is often set up close to where people connect to the public Wi-Fi network. From there, attackers can gain access to emails, phone numbers, credit card numbers, business data, and much more.

Because of this and other threats, it is important to take steps to protect your information when you need to use a public Wi-Fi network. Here are some do's and don'ts when using public Wi-Fi:

- Do connect to a secured public network. Secured networks require users to agree to legal terms, register an account and enter a password before using the network.
- Do disable automatic Wi-Fi connections and make sure you're always manually selecting the network you want to use.

- Do use a Virtual Private Network (VPN) which encrypts your data and creates a safe channel for all your Internet traffic.
- Don't access your personal bank account or conduct financial transactions like shopping online when on public Wi-Fi.
- Don't provide any personal identifiable or sensitive information online, even through private messaging. Identity theft is a huge problem, and any small detail can aid potential cyber criminals.
- Don't use an outdated browser. Many Internet browsers are updated regularly with new identity theft protection features that will alert you to potential threats.

When accessing the Internet while away from home, do what you can to protect your digital communications from prying eyes. Taking these simple precautions will save you from future headaches.



Checking Your Data

Streaming your favourite show is fun, but it can bring you closer to using the monthly data limit of your SaskTel wireless rate plan. For customers who do not subscribe to an unlimited plan, SaskTel sends data notifications to your device to let you know when you are nearing or have reached 100% of your monthly allowance.

To avoid going over your limit, try to get in the habit of checking your usage regularly by visiting www.sasktel.com/myusage on your Android or iOS device or by using the free mySASKTEL mobile app.

There are also many sensible ways to trim your data usage such as using Wi-Fi when available or accessing one of SaskTel's free and secure Select Wi-Fi hotspots across the province. For more data-saving tips, visit www.sasktel.com/manageyourdata.

Cellular Safety on the Road

When you are on the road, safe driving is your primary responsibility. And, although cellular phone use while driving is just one component of a larger safety issue related to driver distraction, knowing the rules around safely using a cellphone while driving is an important part of modern life.



Here in Saskatchewan, new drivers (those in the Graduated Driver Licensing Program) are prohibited from any type of cell phone use while driving.

Although experienced drivers are allowed to use a hands-free device, under current legislation, police in Saskatchewan can fine drivers \$280 and 4 demerit points for breaking these rules. In addition, police across Canada

can charge drivers whose use of cellular phones is affecting their ability to drive safely with “driving without due care and attention”.

Distracted driving continues to be a big problem in Saskatchewan. According to SGI, driver inattention and distraction is the top contributing factor in collisions overall and one of the top causes in fatal accidents. To minimize distractions that may be caused by using your cellular phone in a vehicle, please keep the following in mind:

- Avoid emotional or stressful conversations.
- If you must answer a call, pull over and park before you do.
- 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 cellular 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.

All 10 provinces in Canada have some form of distracted driving legislation in place. So, before you hit the road, plan ahead and do your part to keep our roads safe.

Wireless 9-1-1 Awareness

With wireless technology, phones and features changing and improving all the time, customers can sometimes overestimate the safety capabilities and reach of their mobile devices. A wireless device will not provide a traveler with all their security and safety needs.

While SaskTel wireless services 99% of the population, it is impossible to cover 100% of the land base. Line of sight requirements and manmade obstacles may also limit coverage.

Customers need to remember that a wireless device must be connected to a local wireless network to call 9-1-1. In addition, a device's battery must be charged to connect to the network.

When calling 9-1-1 from a wireless device, the network attempts to determine the caller's location automatically. However, this process is complex at best, and can only approximate your location.

Calls must last at least thirty (30) seconds to generate the approximate location. The system cannot provide a specific street or apartment number in any location be it urban or rural.

When making a wireless 9-1-1 call, be prepared to provide the location of the emergency, the nature of the emergency, and your wireless call back number, with as much detail as possible. Remain on the line with the 9-1-1 call-taker until they advise you to hang up, and remember to leave your wireless device turned on in case the 911 call-taker calls back. Airtime is not billed for 9-1-1 calls.

Make safe choices, be prepared for unexpected weather, and always make sure that someone knows your route and arrival time when traveling to remote areas.

To learn more about the limitations of 9-1-1 calling from a wireless device, please visit our website at www.sasktel.com/wireless911.