



# GRAND MOUND PHONET NEWSLETTER

Quarterly Newsletter Published for our Customers

June 2008



## **PROTECT YOUR PHONE BILL: LEARN TO AVOID, DETECT AND RESOLVE TELEPHONE FRAUD**

Everyone can take steps to help themselves avoid being victimized by commonplace telephone marketing and billing deceptions. The Iowa Utilities Board (IUB), toll-free 1-877-565-4450, can often help customers who do fall prey to these unethical and unlawful practices.

Switching a customer's local or long distance provider (slamming) and adding or charging optional services to a customer's account (cramming), without the customer's knowledge or permission, are among the most common fraudulent practices seen. The IUB has lawful authority to fine companies found to be doing this and stop them from providing service in Iowa.

Slamming can be achieved by many means, including direct mail or prize offerings, sweepstakes entries, or other methods. In cramming cases, services like Internet, personal 800 numbers, 900 numbers, caller ID, pagers and voice mail, for example, are often attributed to third party providers that bill customers through local phone companies.

Customers should closely examine their monthly bill statements, watching for any new service entries that they did not authorize or any company name that is unfamiliar. Try to contact the company to request an explanation of any charges that you feel are inappropriate before contacting your local telephone company or the IUB for assistance. The IUB receives slamming and cramming complaints from customers and monitors patterns and practices of these companies, with many complaints being elevated to formal complaint status, where a proceeding is held and companies may be levied fines and/or barred from providing service for unlawful violations.

Other precautions customers can take to avoid being slammed or crammed include reading all fine print for contests, sweepstakes or incentives like bonus checks, free minutes, or raffle entries. These may authorize telephone service changes or additions. Also, turn down pitches from telemarketers or listen intently, being careful not to answer "yes" to anything you do not understand. If something sounds too good to be true, it probably is. You might also contact your local telephone service provider to safeguard your account by requesting a Prescribed Interchange Carrier (PIC) freeze. There may be a minimal fee for doing this.

Source: IUB News & Information Release, April 28, 2008

## **Holiday Closing**

Grand Mound Cooperative  
Telephone Assn.  
and  
Grand Mound  
Communications Co.  
will be closed on  
**Friday, July 4<sup>th</sup>**  
for Independence Day.

We will reopen on  
Monday, July 7<sup>th</sup>  
at our normal time.

**Have a Safe & Happy**  
**4<sup>th</sup> of July!**

## **NOTICE REGARDING COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

If you have a complaint, a utility representative qualified to assist in resolving the complaint can be reached through your local telephone company.

If your local telephone company does not resolve your complaint, you may request assistance from:

Iowa Utilities Board  
350 Maple Street  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319  
Telephone: (515) 281-3839  
Toll-free: (877) 565-4450  
Email: [iubcustomer@iub.state.ia.us](mailto:iubcustomer@iub.state.ia.us)

or you can file a complaint online by filling out the form at:

[http://www.state.ia.us/government/com/util/forms/CustServ/form\\_Complaints.html](http://www.state.ia.us/government/com/util/forms/CustServ/form_Complaints.html)



## QUESTION OF THE DAY

**Q. I keep getting spam e-mail messages having to do with online prescriptions and replica watches or handbags. What can I do to stop receiving these e-mail messages? I use Outlook Express 6 & Windows XP Home Edition SP2. My e-mail account is through my Internet Service Provider.**

A. Chances are that your Internet Service Provider (ISP) is already using a filter on its e-mail server to prevent many of these types of messages from getting through to you. So, it could be worse. Many ISPs also offer an optional e-mail filtering tool to their users (for a nominal fee). Users are able to customize their own filtering settings. These programs are very effective and well worth any nominal fee charged by the ISP.

In addition, most e-mail software programs also include a feature that allows you to create rules for special handling of inbound e-mail messages. To create a Message Rule using Outlook Express that automatically deletes e-mail messages containing the word "replica" in the subject line, follow these steps:

1. Open Outlook Express and click your cursor arrow on "Tools".
2. Select "Message Rules" from the drop-down menu and then click on "Mail" from the resulting submenu.
3. The New Mail Rule window will appear. In the "Select the Conditions for your rule:" section, check the box that reads, "Where the Subject line contains specific words."
4. In the second section entitled "Select the Actions for your rule:", check the box labeled "Delete it."
5. In the third section labeled "Rule Description," click on the blue underlined text that says "contains specific words."
6. The Type Specific Words window will appear. In the first open field (below the text that says, "Type specific words or a phrase, and click Add") type the word "replica" (omit the quotations marks).
7. Click on the "Add" button and then click "OK."
8. You'll be returned to the New Mail Rule window. In the fourth section labeled "Name of the rule:", type in the name of your rule, i.e. "replica" (omit the quotation marks).
9. Click "OK" on the New Mail Rule window.
10. Finally, click "OK" on the Message Rules window to exit. This new specific rule should now delete any inbound e-mail message that contains the word "replica" in its subject line.

Source: WebsiteCompass Magazine, Spring 2008 issue

### NEW DIRECTORY LISTINGS AND UPDATES

	-C-	
Campbell, Amy 2260 Hwy 30 Grand Mound.....		847-1957
	-P-	
Posey, Alan & Kathy 501 Fulton St Grand Mound.....		847-1335
	-R-	
Robertson, Don & Judy 812 Joyce Ct Grand Mound.....		847-2677
	-S-	
Saeugling, Don 810 Fulton St Grand Mound.....		847-2742
	-T-	
Tank, Nathan & Lisa 2536 270 St DeWitt.....		847-1100



Published quarterly for customers of

**Grand Mound Coop.  
Telephone Assn.  
and  
Grand Mound  
Communications Co.**

providing local telephone service for the Grand Mound area, PCS Wireless, Voice Mail, Paging Services, travel calling cards, data and fax services, CATV, Internet, DSL and Wireless DSL.

**(563) 847-3000**

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P.O. Box 316  
Grand Mound, IA 52751

[grmd@gmcta.coop](mailto:grmd@gmcta.coop)

#### **Business Office Hours**

Monday to Friday  
8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

#### **General Manager**

Don Robertson

#### **Office Manager**

Terri Bumann

#### **Office Assistant**

Dee Dee Banowetz

#### **Combination Technician**

Chris Beuthien

#### **Board of Directors**

Dennis Campbell  
Kurt Crosthwaite  
Roger Green  
David Schnack  
Ruth Schroeder  
Harry Slaymaker  
Wayne Whitman

