



Internet Connection Fees

A Publication Of The Missouri Public Service Commission

Many times consumers are surprised to find out that they have been billed for a long distance call without their knowledge just because they logged onto the Internet. Consumers should carefully read all the information when setting up software to connect to their Internet provider. Some computer settings may result in a consumer paying toll (long distance) charges for the entire time they are connected to the Internet.

Things You Should Know To Avoid Paying Toll Charges

■ During the initial setup of connection software, Internet providers usually will assign phone numbers (both primary and secondary) to a consumer's computer for access to the Internet. The numbers selected connect the consumer to the provider's closest location (or server). This number may be a toll call. Even where the closest location is a local call, the program may search for a secondary location (if the first is busy) that may be more distant, or in a different calling area, again resulting in a toll call.

■ While most Internet providers warn their customers to check with their local telephone company to verify that a telephone number is a local call, **it is the customer's responsibility** to ensure that ALL the numbers (both primary and secondary) that the computer may dial are local calls. Failure to ensure that numbers dialed by the computer are local could result in unexpected and unwanted long distance charges. Consumers are responsible for toll calls made from their telephone number, whether they dial the call themselves or their computer dials the call.

■ Confirm, by reviewing the settings of your Internet programs, that all of the connection numbers are within your local calling area. Your telephone directory can assist you in determining what calls are local. When in doubt, call your local telephone company. In addition, your Internet provider can give assistance on changing the "dial-up" setting in your program.



NOTE: The Missouri Public Service Commission does not regulate Internet providers, wireless phone service or cable television. For additional information, contact the Federal Communications Commission at 1-888-225-5322 or www.fcc.gov.

For more information

Created in 1913, the Missouri Public Service Commission (PSC) regulates investor-owned telecommunications, water and sewer, natural gas, electric and steam utilities. The PSC works to ensure that Missouri citizens receive safe, reliable and reasonably priced utility services. If you have an inquiry, billing question or service-related problem that your utility provider cannot answer, please call the PSC at 1-800-392-4211 or visit our website at www.psc.mo.gov