

## Know Your Telephone Services and Costs



Do you regularly review your monthly telephone bill and its itemized charges? The Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) recommends that all consumers check their billing statements as a matter of routine. Telephone bills have become more complex and may include unfamiliar, inappropriate, or incorrect charges.

A monthly bill from your local telephone company will always include charges for basic local exchange service. Other charges may include:

- Costs for optional services, such as a second telephone line;
- Long distance charges from other companies;
- Voice messaging services;
- Inside-the-home wire maintenance contracts (an optional service); and

- Custom calling features (caller ID, call waiting, call forwarding and others). The titles for these services can vary from company to company.

It is a good idea to review your bill each month to ensure that charges appear only for the services you have ordered. If a charge does not appear to be correct, call your local telephone company as soon as possible and request an explanation. Note, however, that the MPSC does not regulate the rates and charges for services and the charges may change without notice.

The following charges may appear on your monthly local and long distance bills as permitted by state or federal law.

**Federal Subscriber Line Charge** - covers a portion of the cost to operate and maintain the local telephone network.

**Universal Service Fund or Lifeline Surcharge** - provides assistance to rural and low-income telephone customers. It also helps supply technology to libraries and public schools.

This charge varies by telephone company.

### **Other Fixed Charges -**

**911 Surcharges** - covers the cost of operating the local emergency phone system. It's required on all customers' bills

- Municipal Utilities Charge or Tax, which may be authorized by your local community

### **State and Federal Taxes**

*For questions regarding the above charges, call your local or long distance telephone company.*

