



Services

All around communications. ISSUE 4 VOLUME 3 SEPTEMBER, 2014
A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Subscriber Charges Explained

What's all of this on my phone bill?

FCC Subscriber Line Charge (SLC) (FCC Business Multi-Line Charge)

Why is it on the bill? Title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 69.152; United States Congress via the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in 1983. The FCC subscriber line charge (SLC) came into being as part of the rate structure following the divestiture of the regional Bell operating companies from AT&T. Title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, Sections 69.104, 69.153, & 69.154; United States Congress via the FCC, effective January 1, 1998.

How much is it? Local telephone companies assess the SLC to recover interstate costs associated with the local loop that are not recovered elsewhere.

The Subscriber Line Charge (SLC) and the Presubscribed In-

terstate Carrier Charge (PICC) were combined by the FCC effective July 2000 under the name SLC. The current maximum SLC is \$6.50 for Residential lines but may be as high as \$9.20 for Business lines.

Federal Universal Service Fund (FUSF) Charge

Why is it on the bill? Title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, Sections 36, 54, and 69; United States Congress, via the FCC. Effective January 1, 1998.

What is it? This is the mechanism for funding the federal Universal Service Fund (USF). The FUSF charge is assessed to all telecommunications companies with interstate operations, including long-distance carriers, wireless companies, pager companies, and payphone companies. The amount collected through this charge funds telecommunications services' discounts to schools, libraries, rural health care providers, and low-income customers; it also provides funds to local telephone companies that serve rural, insular, and high-cost areas.

How much is it? The percentage factor for FUSF is adjusted quarterly. The current rate effective July 1, 2014 is 15.7%.

Which Bill is it on? Subscriber Line Charge, Access Recovery Charge, and Interstate long Distance.

Which customers are exempt from paying this charge? Subscribers on Lifeline Assistance programs and tax-exempt entities such as governmental agencies.

Texas Universal Service Fund Surcharge (TUSF)

Why is it on the bill? Public Utility Regulatory Act, Chapter 56; Texas Legislature, in 1987 and 1999; U.S. Congress via the FCC in 1996.

What is it? The TUSF allows affordable service to high-cost rural customers, funds the Relay

Texas and Specialized Telecommunications Assistance programs for the hearing-disabled, and funds telecommunications services discounts to low-income customers (Tel-Assistance and Lifeline).

How much is it? Currently 3.7% of taxable intrastate communications receipts.

Which Bill is it on? Local Telephone and Intrastate Long Distance

Which customers are exempt from paying this charge? Tax-exempt entities such as governmental agencies, churches, schools and universities. Non-governmental

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SEC, Longhorn Networks added

SEC and UT fans can get their sports fix 24/7 now with both networks added to the WT Services lineup.

In Hereford, SEC will be on Channel 48 and Longhorn will be on Channel 47.

Some local channels are being shifted to make room for these new sports channels.

ABC Family moves to Channel 68. MTV Jams moves to Channel 95. BET moves to Channel 101.

TBS moves to Channel 119.

The SEC network will televise approximately 45 SEC football games, more than 100 men's basketball games, 60 women's basketball games, 75 baseball games, and events from across the SEC's 21 sports annually. The Longhorn Network features 20 different sports involving the Texas Longhorns athletics department, along with original and historical programming.

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Hereford: A Smart Community—with Fiber to the Premise—by WT Services.

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organizations must provide an exemption certificate.

9-1-1 Emergency Service Fee

Why is it on the bill? Texas Health & Safety Code, Section 771.071; Texas Legislature, in 1987.

What is it? This fee funds the provision of 9-1-1 emergency telecommunications services.

How much is it? The state 9-1-1 advisory commission sets this fee. The fee, which is based on the cost of providing 9-1-1 service in the region in which the customer is located, may not exceed \$0.50 per month for each local telephone line. The fee must be stated separately on the customer's bill.

Which Bill is it on? Local Telephone.

Which customers are exempt from paying this charge? Texas state agencies.

9-1-1 Equalization Surcharge

Why is it on the bill? Texas Health & Safety Code, Section 771.072; Texas Legislature, in 1995.

What is it? This surcharge generates additional funds for

regions that do not collect sufficient funds through the 9-1-1 emergency service fee. The state 9-1-1 advisory commission imposes this surcharge on customers receiving intrastate long-distance service.

How much is it? The surcharge is \$.06 per month for each local telephone line.

Which Bill is it on? Local Telephone

Which customers are exempt from paying this charge? Texas state agencies

Municipal Franchise Fee

Why is it on the bill? House Bill 1777, Section 283.051(a); Texas Legislature, in 1999; Public Utility Regulatory Act, Section 54.206; Texas Legislature, in 1995.

What is it? Recently enacted House Bill 1777 requires certificated telecommunications providers that provide telecommunications service within a municipality to compensate the municipality for the use of public rights-of-way. House Bill 1777 gives the PUC responsibility for determining these amounts; previously, municipalities and carriers addressed the compensation issue through negotiated agreements. The PUC is in the process of adopting rules implementing House Bill 1777.

How much is it? The amount of the fee will vary by municipality and type of customer.

Which Bill is it on? Local Telephone

Which customers are exempt from paying this charge? Electric utilities, water,

sewer, natural gas providers and cable TV.

State and Local Sales Tax

Why is it on the bill? Texas Tax Code, Sections 151.051, 151.308, and 151.323; Texas Legislature and local jurisdictions including cities, counties, special purpose districts, and transit authorities.

What is it? These taxes are levied on each sale of a taxable item in Texas. Additionally, there are local sales and use taxes imposed by cities, counties and special purpose districts. The tax is imposed on local charges, non-regulated charges and long distance.

How much is it? The state tax rate is 6.25%; the total of all local taxes cannot exceed 2%. Therefore, state and local taxes combined cannot exceed 8.25%. Not every city in Texas charges local taxes on telecommunications.

Which Bill is it on? Local Telephone, Long Distance, Cable & Internet

Bundle customers can upgrade speed

If you're enrolled in one of the cost-cutting bundled packages from WT Services, you can increase your internet speed to 10, 15, or 20 meg for a nominal fee.

Companion upload speeds from WT Services are perfect if you need to upload data or are a gamer. Contact the WT Services business office in Hereford at 360-9000 to take advantage of this upgrade.

Which customers are exempt from paying this charge? Tax-exempt entities such as governmental agencies, churches, schools and universities. Non-governmental organizations must provide an exemption certificate.

Federal Excise Tax

Why is it on the bill? Title 26, United States Code, Sections 4251 and 3; United States Congress (1898).

What is it? The federal excise tax was originally initiated as a luxury tax to pay for the Spanish-American War. Now, all proceeds are used for general revenue purposes.

How much is it? It is 3% of all billed local telecommunication services.

Which Bill is it on? Local Telephone

Which customers are exempt from paying this charge? Tax-exempt entities such as governmental agencies.

Expanded Local Calling - WT Services (Bovina and Hereford exchanges only)

ELCS expands rural customers' local calling scopes by allowing them to call additional exchanges for a flat fee, rather than incur long-distance charges assessed on a per-minute basis. If the cost of providing ELCS exceeds the revenues received from the service, state law allows the local telephone company to surcharge all Texas customers to make up the difference. The ELCS surcharge varies among companies. The PUC must approve all ELCS fees and surcharges.

Online contact for radio shops

Customers with two-way radio needs may contact WT Services radio shops in Hereford and Amarillo online. Go to wtstx.com to browse merchandise and services offered.