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Pay by draft and save

WT Services Friona/Bovina customers can get a one percent discount by paying their bill by bank draft.

Customers who authorize draft payment agree to have their bank account drafted for the amount of their outstanding balance on their account with WT Services. Drafts will occur between the 20th and 23rd of each month.

To arrange to pay your WT Services bill via bank draft contact the WT Services office in Friona at 1010 Columbia to obtain the necessary authorization form .



## SmartHub billing begins this month, online bill payments to be available

WT Services and West Texas Rural Telephone are rolling out some exciting new billing and payment changes!

Beginning in May, our new billing system, SmartHub, will be up and running.

SmartHub will make online check payments, credit card payments and receiving electronic bills available and easy.

SmartHub will send you a monthly e-mail reminder that your bill is ready. You don't have to risk missed or late payments again.

Whether you are re-establishing automatic payments or setting them up for the first time, you will need to visit SmartHub after May 5.

We take great care to comply with all payment card industry compliance laws which protect your credit card information.

That means that we cannot simply extract and



move existing credit card information to the new billing system.

Therefore, if you previously set up automatic credit card payments, you will need to re-enter your credit card information into our new system.

This can be done by selecting "Pay My Bill" from the left navigation. Then select "Auto Pay Accounts" from the left navigation. Click the "Sign Up for Auto Pay" hyperlink. Select "Credit/Debit Card" or "Checking Account" and enter your information in order to pay for services automatically each month.

Payment by phone can be done by calling 1-844-201-7198. A four-digit pin number will be required.

Customers will be able to go to the WT Services, Inc. website located at [www.wtservices.net](http://www.wtservices.net) or the WTRT website at [www.wtrt.net](http://www.wtrt.net) and find the link to go to the SmartHub location.

Monthly bills received in the mail will be in a format that includes a header section providing a quick way to look at your previous and current amounts due along with payments or adjustments that occurred in the past period.

A Bill At a Glance column will provide a summary for each type of service and associated charge. Page 1 of the bill will include a Message Center providing notices from WT Services or WTRT.

A remittance stub should be torn off and included with your payment. A Monthly Usage section of the bill further explains charges associated with each service and itemizes charges.

# Multiple telephone scams in Panhandle region have cost area residents upwards of \$180,000

An assortment of telephone scams from fake numbers have been foisted on residents of the High Plains this spring, with losses to victims building toward a quarter million dollars.

In the scams, callers have posed as employees of the IRS, Xcel Energy, local law enforcement, Microsoft, and Craigslist, among others, and

have preyed upon people's inclination to do the right thing when in doubt.

Area law enforcement advises to never put cash on iTunes cards or other types of gift cards to pay back taxes, settle debts, pay bills, or pay for merchandise, and don't wire money, provide your debit or credit card information, or provide personal

**SCHEMING  
CRAFTY  
AGGRESSIVE  
MALICIOUS**  
DON'T LET THEM CON YOU

as banking names and passwords, or they may even try to gain access to an individual's computer remotely. Some scammers have tried to obtain credit card information, hoping to bill unsuspecting customers for fake services.

Computer users are reminded not to call any numbers that come up as error messages on their PC. Additionally, Microsoft will never contact you to provide technical support.

Again, preying upon the unwary, Craigslist scammers have contacted sellers, seeking to buy an item, paying with a counterfeit check, cashier's check, or money order made out for more than the agreed upon price, then asking sellers to cash their check and send back the difference.

Making the rounds yet again are scammers posing as local law enforcement, claiming that they have a warrant for an individual's arrest, or that a family member has been arrested and needs to have bail posted. Keep in mind, law enforcement agencies don't contact citizens and demand payment over the phone for a bond or warrant, they don't recommend a bonding company to use, and they won't contact you to instruct you to pay a fine for not appearing for jury duty.

information to an unverified source.

Be aware, the IRS does not call to demand payment of back taxes over the phone. In the unhappy event that you owe taxes, the IRS will send a letter. If in doubt, you can call the IRS at 1-800-829-1040. Any attempted scam involving the IRS can be reported to the Federal Trade Commission at [www.ic3.org](http://www.ic3.org).

Similarly, Xcel Energy sends a letter in the U.S. Mail prior to power being shut off, and offers a number of ways for paying bills. You should be suspicious if a caller claiming to represent the utility asks for payment with pre-paid debit cards or Green Dot cards. Customers can check their account with Xcel or report a scam by calling the Xcel Business Solutions Center at 1-800-481-4700.

Area law enforcement reports that scammers representing themselves as Microsoft representatives have been calling or emailing attempting to dupe people into installing software that can capture vital data such

## Keeping passwords secure a serious consideration

Are your passwords secure? It's a serious matter to consider.

There's widespread use of websites for banking, shopping, sharing photos, accessing medical records and lots more personal information. All of those websites we use come with a long and sometimes confusing list of passwords to access them.

The Pew Research Center released a report in January that showed that 39% of adults online admit they have a hard time keeping track of all of their passwords. It's an understandable problem when passwords have proliferated so much.

Many Internet users confronted with the problem of keeping track resort to using common words for their passwords--or the same password for several accounts. It's a mistake that



could put personal information at risk.

Here are some tips for managing your passwords from ConnectSafely.org, a nonprofit organization dedicated to educating users of connected technology about safety, privacy, and security:

- Make the password at least eight characters long.
- Don't use just one password.
- Create passwords that are easy to remember but hard for others to guess
- Include numbers, capital letters, and symbols.
- Consider using a password manager.