

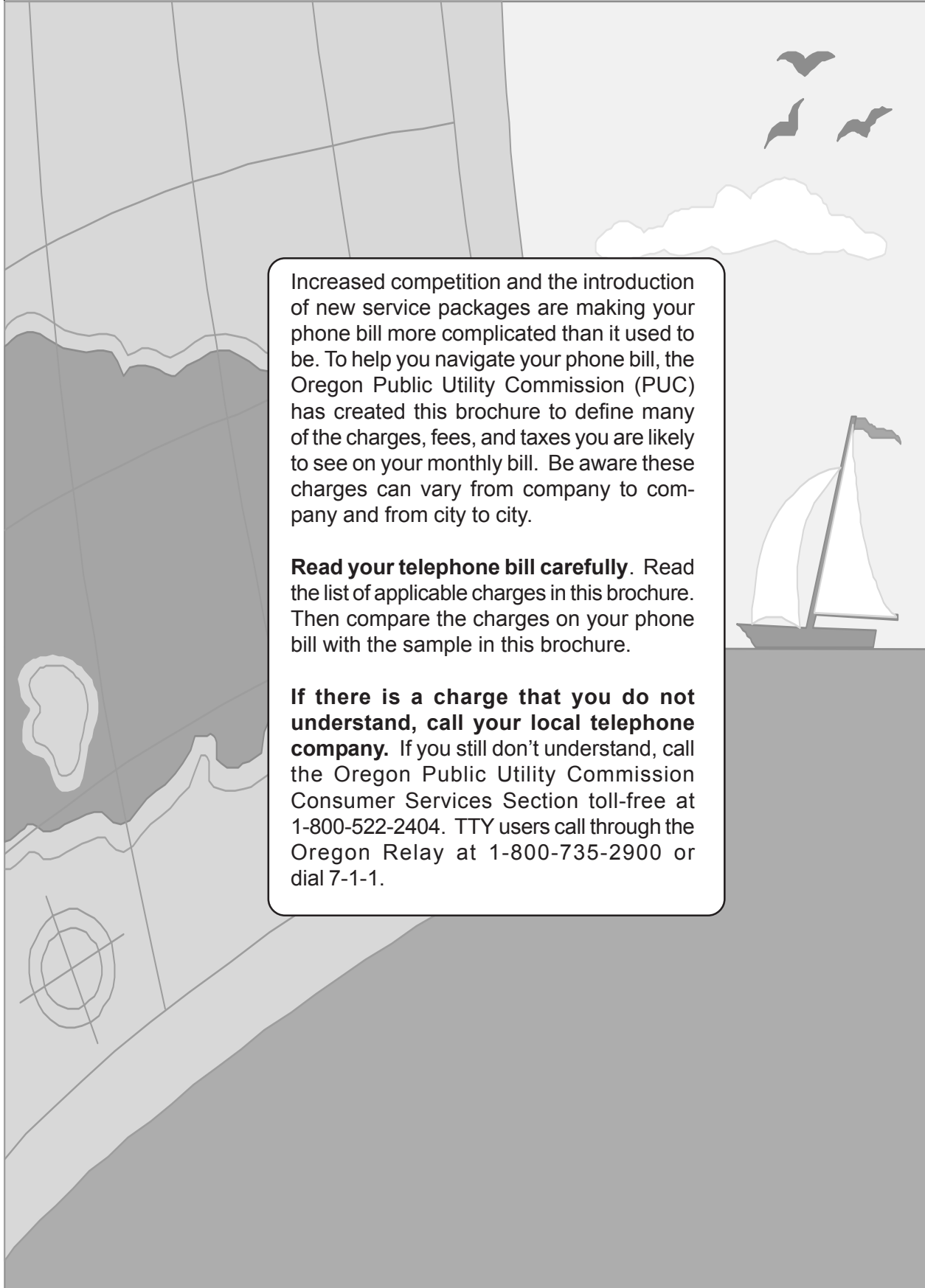


A Guide to Understanding Your Telephone Bill

Navigating

*your
phone bill*



The background features a stylized map on the left side with various lines and shapes. In the upper right, there are three birds flying in a V-formation above a single cloud. On the right side, a sailboat with a white sail is shown on a dark grey sea. The overall color palette is monochromatic, using shades of grey and white.

Increased competition and the introduction of new service packages are making your phone bill more complicated than it used to be. To help you navigate your phone bill, the Oregon Public Utility Commission (PUC) has created this brochure to define many of the charges, fees, and taxes you are likely to see on your monthly bill. Be aware these charges can vary from company to company and from city to city.

Read your telephone bill carefully. Read the list of applicable charges in this brochure. Then compare the charges on your phone bill with the sample in this brochure.

If there is a charge that you do not understand, call your local telephone company. If you still don't understand, call the Oregon Public Utility Commission Consumer Services Section toll-free at 1-800-522-2404. TTY users call through the Oregon Relay at 1-800-735-2900 or dial 7-1-1.

Sample Bill

*A Guide to
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Phone Number: XXX-XXX-XXXX

Date



Company

Logo

Detailed Statement of Charges

Quantity Amount

LOCAL PHONE CHARGES

1	Residential Line Charge	1	\$X.XX
2	Extended Area Calling/Service (EAS)	1	\$X.XX
3	FCC Charge for Network Access	1	\$X.XX
4	Optional Services	1	\$X.XX

LONG DISTANCE CHARGES

5	Long Distance Charges	1	\$X.XX
6	Payphone Surcharge	1	\$X.XX
7	Calling Plan Charges	1	\$X.XX
8	Pay-Per-Call Services	1	\$X.XX
9	Federal Telecommunications Relay Service	1	\$X.XX

TAXES AND FEES

10	Federal Universal Service Fund	1	\$X.XX
11	Oregon Universal Service Fund	1	\$X.XX
12	Federal Excise Tax	1	\$X.XX
13	Residential Service Protection Fund	1	\$X.XX
14	Oregon PUC Fee	1	\$X.XX
15	Franchise Charge	1	\$X.XX

Local Phone Charges

1 **Residential Line Charge**

Sometimes listed as an Access Line Charge, this is the basic monthly charge for local phone service (dial tone). It may be a flat rate fee or it may be a flat rate plus usage charges.

2 **Extended Area Calling/Service (EAS)**

This charge replaces per-minute long distance charges for calls to some neighboring exchanges. You may generally select a Flat Rate for unlimited calls or may select to be billed on a per-minute rate for all calls made.

3 **FCC Charge for Network Access**

Sometimes listed as Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Subscriber Line Charge, Federal Subscriber Line Charge, Federal Access Charge, Customer Line Charge, FCC-Approved Customer Line Charge, or Subscriber Line Charge (SLC), this charge, which is required by the FCC, helps cover the local phone company's fixed costs of operating and maintaining the local phone network, so customers can make long distance calls. It applies whether or not the household makes long distance calls.

4 **Optional Services**

These are "add-on" services chosen by you, such as call waiting, caller ID, paging, blocking, voice mail, etc. Each service, along with its charge is shown separately on the bill.



Long Distance Charges

5 Long Distance Charges

These are the charges for all long distance calls provided by the customer's selected long distance carrier. Itemized information on each call is usually provided on a separate page or possibly in a separate billing. It includes the following: the date of the call; the long distance number called; the city to where the call is placed; the starting and ending times of the call; the number of minutes each call lasted; and the charge for each call.

6 Payphone Surcharge

This charge, sometimes listed as a Payphone Access Fee, is a per-call fee of about 30 cents that long distance companies may charge on calls made with a calling card from a pay telephone. Not all phone companies list this fee on each call; instead, they may describe the charge elsewhere in the bill.

7 Calling Plan Charges

Most long distance companies offer calling plans ranging in price from a few dollars to several dollars a month, to give you more options on international and long distance calling rates. Companies offering calling cards and dial-around plans also may charge a monthly fee to use their services.

8 Pay-Per-Call Services

These are information and entertainment services provided through 900 numbers, some 800 numbers, and certain international phone numbers. The charges are set by the service providers not the phone companies. The rates can vary from as little as a few cents to several dollars per minute.

9 Federal Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS)

All interstate carriers must support federal TRS, which enables phone conversations between people with speech/hearing impairments and those without. The federal TRS surcharge is assessed as a percentage of your interstate long-distance charges.

Taxes

10 Federal Universal Service Fund Surcharge

This surcharge goes to the federal funding system that helps to make phone service affordable to all Americans, including customers with low incomes, schools, libraries, rural health care providers, and those living in areas where the cost of providing service is high.

11 Oregon Universal Service Fund Surcharge

This surcharge supplements the federal universal service funding to ensure that high quality and affordable phone service is available to all Oregonians, especially those living in rural areas where the cost of providing phone service is high.

12 Federal Excise Tax

Sometimes listed as a federal excise tax. This three percent tax is mandated by the federal government and is levied on local and wireless telecommunications services.

13 Residential Service Protection Fund Surcharge (RSPF)¹³

This surcharge applies to Oregon cellular and land-line phone customers. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, it provides to those who cannot use standard phone service relay services for Oregonians with speech/hearing impairments. It also assists low-income customers with paying their phone bills.

14 Oregon PUC Fee

This fee recovers the amount the phone company pays to the Oregon PUC to help cover the cost of regulation. The fee is assessed on local and long distance land-line services in Oregon.

15 Franchise Fee

This fee recovers the phone company's cost of operating within your city or municipality, including fees as payment for the company's right to place poles, cables and wires along public streets and other rights of way.

