
LOSING YOUR CELL PHONE – LOSING YOUR PRIVACY

If your cell phone goes missing you are not only losing money, you are also losing privacy including the private phone numbers and any other confidential information stored in the phone. Before you discard or sell your cell phone, erase the numbers. Never trust this to someone else to do. Make sure you wipe any messages received.

You may have to spend days calling friends around the world to advise them of the theft and this can cost you a lot of money as well. Thieves can make calls on cell phones valuing thousands of dollars so do not delay reporting it.



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Cell Phone Theft

Because they are small they are easily targeted by thieves. Millions of cell phones are stolen in North America each year. Customers are usually responsible for paying any bills that are run up by a thief.

ANTI-THEFT TIPS

- Never put your cell phone down. Be aware of where it is
- Account for each cell phone in your home every day.
- Keep your phone at home, or with you.
- Place your cell phone out of site and lock it up in your vehicle

CELL PHONE CODING

Most cell phones will be coded by the service provider or carrier so that they cannot be switched from one carrier to another. This makes it less profitable for a thief to use the phone, and also makes it very important for you to contact your own carrier immediately if it is stolen.



ESN – ELECTRONIC SERIAL NUMBER

Cell phones have an internal Electronic Serial Number (ESN). If someone has your ESN they could clone (reprogram another phone) and make calls that would be billed to your account. Store your service agreement containing your ESN in a safe place. If you lose your ESN you can call your carrier to find out what it is. You will need your ESN if you lose your cell phone.

INSURANCE

Anti-theft insurance for your cell phone is expensive. The insurance is for replacing the cell phone, and most likely will not cover charges that might be run up by a thief.

TRAVELING

Turn your cell phone off if you are traveling out of the country. Leaving your phone on opens your broadcast; your serial number can be stolen and cloned. You may have roaming charges simply by passing towers in the United States. ESN theft is high in Mexico. You may need to check with your carrier about out of country service. Turn your cell phone off in airports.

REPORTING

If your phone is stolen call your provider and also file a police report. Quick reaction can minimize the amount of fraudulent calls charged to your phone. Remember that so many cell phones are stolen it is impossible for the police to track them all.

CELL PHONE VIRUSES

Viruses and worms are spreading to cell phones and computers such as those in cars with satellite communication systems. The impact on internet phone services will potentially see an increase in service disruptions and eavesdropping on calls. Another development is the ability to imbed malicious programming freely transmitted through email and the internet.

CELL PHONES AND DRIVING

It is illegal to use your cell phone when driving. Even a hands-free device is not safe. Lock your phone when you leave your car, and make sure it is hidden. Better yet, take it with you. If your cell phone is stolen along with your car, remember to include it in your police report.
