



# GRAND MOUND PHONET NEWSLETTER

Quarterly Newsletter Published for our Customers

September 2009



## **PROTECT YOUR PHONE BILL: LEARN TO AVOID, DETECT AND RESOLVE TELEPHONE FRAUD**

Everyone can take steps to help themselves avoid being victimized by commonplace telephone marketing and billing deceptions. The Iowa Utilities Board (IUB), toll-free 1-877-565-4450, can often help customers who do fall prey to these unethical and unlawful practices.

Switching a customer's local or long distance provider (slamming) and adding or charging optional services to a customer's account (cramming), without the customer's knowledge or permission, are among the most common fraudulent practices seen. The IUB has lawful authority to fine companies found to be doing this and stop them from providing service in Iowa.

Slamming can be achieved by many means, including direct mail or prize offerings, sweepstakes entries, or other methods. In cramming cases, services like Internet, personal 800 numbers, 900 numbers, caller ID, pagers and voice mail, for example, are often attributed to third party providers that bill customers through local phone companies.

*Customers should closely examine their monthly bill statements, watching for any new service entries that they did not authorize or any company name that is unfamiliar.* Try to contact the company to request an explanation of any charges that you feel are inappropriate before contacting your local telephone company or the IUB for assistance. The IUB receives slamming and cramming complaints from customers and monitors patterns and practices of these companies, with many complaints being elevated to formal complaint status, where a proceeding is held and companies may be levied fines and/or barred from providing service for unlawful violations.

Other precautions customers can take to avoid being slammed or crammed include reading all fine print for contests, sweepstakes or incentives like bonus checks, free minutes, or raffle entries. These may authorize telephone service changes or additions. Also, turn down pitches from telemarketers or listen intently, being careful not to answer "yes" to anything you do not understand. If something sounds too good to be true, it probably is. You might also contact your local telephone service provider to safeguard your account by requesting a Prescribed Interchange Carrier (PIC) freeze. There may be a minimal fee for doing this.

Source: IUB News & Information Release, April 28, 2008

### ***Holiday Closing***

Grand Mound Coop. Telephone  
&  
Grand Mound Communications  
will be closed on

**Monday, September 7<sup>th</sup>**

for Labor Day.

We will reopen on  
Tuesday, September 8<sup>th</sup>  
at our normal time.

**Have a Safe & Enjoyable  
Labor Day Weekend!**

### **NEW LOCATION AREA FOR WIRELESS HIGH SPEED INTERNET**

Grand Mound Communications Company has installed a new repeater tower for its wireless high speed Internet service at Eastern Iowa Propane, 4540 Lincoln Way on Highway 30 east of Low Moor. This will enable GMCC to service customers within a 3 mile radius north, west and south of Eastern Iowa Propane including Low Moor and Royal Pines Village Mobile Home Park areas.



Call Before You Dig!

**1.800.292.8989**

Call the toll-free number at least  
**48 hours**  
prior to ALL excavations in Iowa.



### COMPUTER MAINTENANCE

- Empty the Recycle Bin and the temporary Internet files.
- Run Microsoft's maintenance tools: ScanDisk, Disk Cleanup, and Disk Defragmenter.
- Enable automatic Windows Updates.
- Delete unneeded items from the Windows Startup menu.
- Back up your data.
- Remove dust from vents on the case.
- Don't install software you don't need especially from the Internet.
- Install antivirus & antispyware programs, and use a firewall.
- Turn your computer off when not in use for long periods, such as at night.
- Enable Windows XP's System Restore or install a program such as Norton GoBack from Symantec, which can return your PC to its pre-problem state.

Source: [www.ConsumerReports.org](http://www.ConsumerReports.org) (June 2006 Issue)

### Making Your Internet Searches More Efficient

#### 1. Use Search Math

Using the "+" sign while searching lets the search engine know that terms following this sign MUST appear in all pages returned in the results. Therefore, a search for (+Ford+dealerships+Atlanta) tells the search engine that every one of these terms must be present on a page in order for it to be returned as a result.

Using the "-" sign while searching tells the search engine what terms NOT to include in your results. For example, a search for (+apple+orchards-computer) tells the search engine to exclude any results containing the term "computer".

#### 2. "Put It In Quotes"

Enclosing your query in quotation marks tells the search engine that it must only return results containing the EXACT phrase you've entered.



**Grand Mound Coop.  
Telephone Assn.  
and  
Grand Mound  
Communications Co.**

providing local telephone service for the Grand Mound area, PCS Wireless, Voice Mail, Paging Services, travel calling cards, data and fax services, CATV, Internet, DSL and Wireless Internet.

**(563) 847-3000**

705 Clinton Street  
P.O. Box 316  
Grand Mound, IA 52751

[grmd@gmcta.coop](mailto:grmd@gmcta.coop)

#### **Business Office Hours**

Monday to Friday  
8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**General Manager**  
Don Robertson

**Office Manager**  
Terri Bumann

**Office Assistant**  
Dee Dee Banowetz

**Combination  
Technician**  
Chris Beuthien

**Plant Technician**  
Nick Wichtoski

**Part-time Technician**  
Harry Slaymaker

**Board of Directors**  
Dennis Campbell  
Kurt Crosthwaite  
Paul Rock  
David Schnack  
Ruth Schroeder  
Harry Slaymaker  
Wayne Whitman



### NEW DIRECTORY LISTINGS AND UPDATES

#### **-A-**

Arp, Tony & Andi  
411 Fulton St Grand Mound.....847-5199

#### **-D-**

Dan's Tree Service  
2108 278 St Calamus.....847-1016

#### **-G-**

Green, Daniel  
2108 278 St Calamus.....847-1016

#### **-I-**

Iams, Charles Jr. & Stacia  
707 DeWitt St Grand Mound.....349-3254

#### **-K-**

Kent, Steve & Becki Kenton  
2341 230 St DeWitt.....847-2121



### SOLAR INTERFERENCE

During the month of October, we will be experiencing solar interference during which degradation or loss of satellite signal will occur on our CATV system.

The paths of the sun on satellite transmissions cause these 10 to 20-minute disruptions.

This will occur between the hours of 2:00-5:00 p.m. for approximately 10 days during October.