

# Understanding your Telephone Bill



Continue to follow along in Tele-Trends each month as we present a series of articles explaining the various fees, funds, taxes and surcharges that appear on your local, land-line phone bill each month.

Regulated local phone companies like Poka Lambro Telephone Cooperative, Inc. are required to collect fees and taxes for state and governmental agencies. This money we collect for these fees and taxes is passed on to the proper entities. Many of these fees are mandated by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and some by state agencies.

Our last segment addressed the Federal Universal Service Charge (FUSC).

*Previous issues of Tele-Trends may be viewed on-line at [www.poka.com](http://www.poka.com).*

## **Texas Universal Service Fund Fee**

In addition to federal programs, some states also collect fees to support their own universal service programs. Like other telecom providers in Texas, we collect fees for the Texas Universal Service Fund that is administered by the Texas Public Utility Commission (PUC). The Texas Universal Service Fee supports universal service programs within our state. Most regulated telecom providers in the state are required to contrib-

ute to the Texas Universal Service Fund to help keep basic local rates affordable for all state residents.

The Texas PUC authorizes telecom providers to recover their universal service contributions through a customer surcharge each month. This surcharge is .0565% of the following charges on your phone bill: local service fee, custom calling feature

charges, intra-state toll, and any PICC charges (prescribed inter-exchange charge – the charge for changing long distance companies).

The PUC uses the Texas Universal Service Fund to ensure that companies in high-cost areas of Texas have sufficient financial support to keep basic local rates affordable for all Texas citizens.

Watch next month's Tele-trends for more information on

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