

FCC Consumer Advisory

Surcharges for International Calls to Wireless Phones

Consumers should be aware that placing an international long distance call from your wireline telephone here in the United States to a wireless phone in another country may result in a “surcharge” on your bill in addition to your usual charges.

This can happen because many foreign countries use a “calling party pays” framework. Under a “calling party pays” framework, wireless phone subscribers pay only for the outgoing calls they place to others. The “calling party” must pay for calls placed to wireless phones. As a result, when wireline U.S. customers call foreign wireless customers, foreign carriers may pass through to the U.S. carrier the additional cost of connecting the wireless call. The U.S. carrier may then pass this cost through to the U.S. customer as a surcharge on his or her bill. Examples of some of the highest **per minute** surcharges currently reflected on certain long distance carriers’ Web sites include: \$0.22 for the United Kingdom; \$0.28 for France; \$0.32 for Panama; and \$0.33 for Uruguay.

Steps You Can Take

- Check with your long distance carrier for more specific information about international wireless surcharges and for international rates.
- Check your carrier’s Web site, which may list surcharges for calls to particular countries.
- Some countries use unique telephone numbers for wireless telephones. Your carrier may be able to provide those numbers (including on its Web site) so that you will know in advance whether you are about to incur a surcharge in calling a foreign number.

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This document is for consumer education purposes only and is not intended to affect any proceeding or cases involving this subject matter or related issues.

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