

CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITIES

September 2023



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How to recognize and avoid scam emails

Scammers use email messages to try to steal your passwords, account numbers and contacts. If they get that information, they can get access to your accounts or they can sell your information to others. Scammers launch thousands of phishing attacks like these every day and they are often successful. Phishing emails often tell a story to trick you into clicking on a link or opening an attachment, telling you that there's a problem with your account and you need to take action to prevent further problems. You might get an unexpected email that looks like it's from a company you know or trust. Before clicking on anything in the email or responding in any way, take the time to look at a few things to confirm the legitimacy of the email.

Some of these emails come from companies you don't even have an account with, and they are easier to recognize as a scam. If the email appears to come from a company you do have an account with, particularly if the company is easily recognized as being local to your area, like Plains, these emails are immediately more confusing.

Take a good look at the email. Phishing scams almost always come from a public domain name, such as gmail. If you can't see the address where the email originated, just hover over the "From" field or click on the "Reply" button and read the return email address that appears in your address bar. Many times, you'll see an email address that is just a run-on string of letters and numbers.


If you see an email like this, especially if it ends with gmail.com, yahoo.com or outlook.com rather than a company domain such as plainstel.com, you can be pretty confident that you are seeing a scam email and you should quickly delete it from your inbox.

If you have any questions at all about whether or not the email is legitimate, call the company or navigate directly to their website and log in to your account to find any issues. If your account is fine, the email is likely a scam.

What if you were in a big hurry and you clicked on a link in a scam email without thinking about it? It is possible for a scammer to gain access to contacts and other information saved in your email account even if you don't send them any personal information. It's also possible that, with that click, you allow a virus or other malicious software to download to your device.

If you think a scammer has your information, like your Social Security, credit card, or bank account number, go to [IdentityTheft.gov](https://www.identitytheft.gov). There you'll see the specific steps to take based on the information that you lost.

If you think you clicked on a link or opened an attachment that downloaded harmful software, update your computer's security software. Then run a scan and remove anything the scan identifies as a problem.



We hid a smaller version of this sunflower somewhere in the newsletter! When you find it, give us a call. We'll put your name in a drawing for this publication and you could win a \$20 bill credit!

You can always reach our tech support for help, any time of the day or night, by dialing your local number at:
970-357-3200, 970-358-3200,
970-359-3200 or 970-664-3200

2024

PHOTO CONTEST



Celebrating Country Life



This year we are celebrating the great rural areas we call home. Even if you live in one of our towns, the countryside is always just a few minutes away and most of us are lucky enough to see it practically every single day.

We've got livestock and wildlife, windmills and old wooden fenceposts, barns and farmhouses, vintage and new farm equipment and vehicles. We have open space, sunsets and fresh air...but that's not all...

We also have small town sports and small town shops and small town/country kids & families & volunteers that help make this a great place for everyone to live!

To enter, provide up to three photos depicting country life no later than **Monday, October 9**. We'll choose photos to include in our 2024 calendar as well as one winning photo to appear on the cover of our 2024 directory. **Photos print best when we receive them in digital form. You'll want to send the largest file size possible, attached to the email as a .jpg file, no smaller than 1 MB!**

I hereby grant Plains Telephone/Plains Communication Services full permission to use any original photography submitted by me for the purpose of publication in calendar or directory, for advertising products, service or programs. The term of my permission shall not be limited. I further waive all rights to financial reimbursement for the use of any photography submitted.

Name _____

Number _____ Date _____

email your photos to photocontest@plainstel.com

