

CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITIES

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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 allowed 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**

2025

PHOTO CONTEST

Rustic Charm on the Plains



One of the reasons the area we call home on the Plains is so attractive is the rustic charm that envelops us. The unrefined, weathered objects, shaped by years of hard work and affectionate use, stand as reminders of bygone days.

Indoors or outdoors, these structures and artifacts create a serene and cozy atmosphere, evoking a sense of home for those of us who value the beauty of our small town and country home on the Plains.

To enter, provide up to **FIVE** photos depicting scenes with Rustic Charm no later than **Monday, October 14**. We'll choose photos to include in our 2025 calendar as well as one winning photo to appear on the cover of our 2025 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, or 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

