

# UTILI-FACTS

## Caller ID

Caller Identification ("Caller ID") allows most phone numbers and the names of persons calling to be directly displayed on either the telephone screen or the screen of a separate display unit. Caller ID is available in all 50 states but may not be available in all areas of every state. If you are not sure if your area has Caller ID, contact your local phone company.



### How does Caller ID work?

In order to use Caller ID, you must subscribe to the service through your local phone company, have a telephone that includes a display screen, or purchase a separate display unit. Caller information is displayed on the screen upon receiving a call. However, caller information may not always be displayed. Instead, you may read "out of area," "private call," "unavailable," or "anonymous." "unknown."

### What does this service cost?

Caller ID is typically an optional service offered for an additional monthly fee. Fees vary by phone company. Call your local telephone service provider to find out the cost of this service. Federal law does not allow the Public Utility Commission (PUC) to regulate the price of Caller ID.

### What if I don't want to be identified?

To protect personal privacy, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rules require telephone companies to offer a free blocking service to all customers who have the Caller ID option and who live in an area where it is accessible. Blocking prevents the display of your name and number. You are able to block selected calls (Per-Call Blocking) or all calls (Per-Line Blocking).

### Per-Call Blocking:

Press \*67 (1167 on a rotary phone) before dialing the phone number. The person receiving this call will see the word "anonymous" or "private" on the Caller ID screen.

### Per-Line Blocking:

You can have your name and number blocked permanently by contacting your local telephone company and requesting the Per-Line Blocking service. You will need to present a "compelling need" for this service, for example, your number is already unlisted, you are a victim of stalking or domestic violence, you make work calls from home occasionally and wish to have your personal number remain private, or you wish to remain anonymous if you call to report a crime or call a "help" hotline.

### How do I unblock my line for a call?

If you want your number displayed when you place a call, you must press \*82 (1182 on a rotary phone) before dialing the phone number. You must redial \*82 every time you want to unblock your line.

### What if I don't want to receive anonymous calls?

Where available, you can subscribe to Anonymous Call Rejection. Anonymous callers will receive a message that your telephone line does not accept blocked calls. This feature is often free. Call your local telephone service provider to confirm.

### Are there any exceptions to blocked calls?

- 800 number/toll-free calls. You are not able to prevent the display of your phone number when you call 800, 866, 877, 888, and 900 numbers.
- Emergency services. Calls to emergency lines are exempted from federal Caller ID rules. When you call emergency numbers, your phone number is transmitted even if you have Per-Line Blocking.
- Telemarketers. Under FCC rules, telemarketers are required to transmit Caller ID information and are prohibited from blocking such information

### QUESTIONS:

Call: 1-888-782-8477, in Austin 512-936-7120  
(TTY 512-936-7136) (FAX 512-936-7003)

Write: PUC - Consumer Protection Division  
P.O. Box 13326, Austin, TX 78711-3326

Online: <http://www.puc.texas.gov/consumer/complaint/Complaint.aspx>

