Phone pass codes should be changed often

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Voice mail and long-distance access codes should be changed often to avoid hacking and unauthorized calls, Verizon warned Monday.

By changing passwords and remote access codes, businesses and households can protect themselves from people who try to hack into their systems and run up large bills, the telecom group said.

"This has become a significant problem that many consumers and businesses don't know about," said Kathy Zanowic, Verizon's chief privacy officer. "The first thing someone should do when setting up a new answering machine at home is select a unique password and enter it into the machine - and then change it every few months," she added.

Customers who believe they have been victimized by a scam should call their local Verizon office to their case could be dealt with on an individual basis.

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