

Cell phone users rack up accidental data charges

August 26 2009, By PETER SVENSSON , AP Technology Writer

(AP) -- Verizon Wireless is looking into ways to prevent subscribers without data plans from accidentally starting up the Web browser on their phones and racking up \$1.99 in fees each time.

On many phones, including ones on other carriers, it's easy to inadvertently hit a button that brings up the [Web browser](#).

"It is obvious to us that we need to fix this aspect of our service," spokesman Tom Pica said.

He said the company is refunding data charges to subscribers who complain.

Customers of the No. 2 carrier, AT&T Inc., have the same problem. Their phones will usually warn them of extra charges the first time they try to start up the company's MediaNet browser, but if the customer agrees to the charges the first time, there is no warning on subsequent access.

Customers at Tracfone Wireless, the largest prepaid carrier, report similar problems.

The Plain Dealer in Cleveland tapped into a vein of frustration among [Verizon Wireless](#) customers in columns on the issue this month.

Most carriers will turn off all data access at the subscriber's request, but

readers the newspaper talked to reported conflicting information from Verizon Wireless customer service representatives, with some being told that turning off data access would also stop picture messaging.

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