

## **NUISANCE TELEPHONE CALLS**

It is not unusual to receive numerous “wrong number” calls on campus. The caller who misdialed should be considerate enough to inform the person called of the wrong number rather than simply hanging up. A caller who simply hangs up the telephone without providing an explanation, may become a suspect in a nuisance telephone call complaint.

Wisconsin Statute 947.012(1) states that whoever makes a telephone call with the intent to frighten, intimidate, threaten, abuse, or harass by:

- ❖ Threatening to inflict injury, physical harm, to any person or property;
- ❖ Uses any obscene, lewd, profane language, or suggests any lewd or lascivious act;
- ❖ Or makes a telephone call with the intent to abuse or threaten any person; is guilty of a Class B Misdemeanor.

Wisconsin Statute 947.012(2) states that it is against the law to:

- ❖ Harass another by causing someone’s telephone to ring repeatedly;
- ❖ Make repeated telephone calls, with or without conversation, with the intent to harass the person at the called number;
- ❖ Make a telephone call, with or without conversation, without disclosing his or her identity, with the intent to harass any person at the called number.
- ❖ Knowingly permit any telephone under your control to be used for any purpose prohibited by law.

### **How to Handle Annoying Calls**

1. When answering your telephone, say “hello” twice, if there is no answer, hang-up.
2. Hang up immediately if something is said inappropriate, but avoid slamming the telephone.
3. Do not give any information out, until you know who you are speaking with.
4. Do not let the caller know you are upset or angry. Any sign of emotion may encourage the caller to continue.
5. Do not try to use humor, be clever, or attempt to counsel the caller.
6. Do not prolong the conversation by trying to gather information from the caller.
7. If possible, use your answering machine to tape harassing calls or screen incoming calls.
8. If all else fails, take your phone off the hook for a few hours and see if that resolves the problem

### **TRACE PROCEDURES**

CenturyTel offers 2 options for customers who are receiving annoying or nuisance telephone calls from an unknown source.

1. The first option requires the victim to dial \*57 immediately after the harassing phone call. \*57 activates an immediate trace of the last incoming call. The victim or customer activating the trace is responsible for the \$5.00 fee for each

successful trace, up to \$25.00. **The information of a successful trace will not be released to the victim.** The victim will then need to file a report of harassing or unwanted telephone calls to the University Police. The University Police will file a report with the District Attorney's Office, requesting a subpoena for the telephone records regarding the successful trace.

2. If the \*57 does not work, the victim will then need to file a written report with the University Police and complete a Confidential Line Trace form. The investigating police officer will fax that form to CenturyTel. Once CenturyTel receives and processes the form, a trace will be placed on the telephone line for 30 days. It is the responsibility of the victim to report all suspected nuisance telephone calls to CenturyTel at **1-888-231-03321**, in addition to documenting the calls for the University Police. If a trace is successful, CenturyTel will contact the University Police and a subpoena for the records will be requested.

- **LIFE THREATENING CALLS: If you receive a phone call that is life threatening, immediately dial \*57 and contact the University Police.**
- **The University Police will cite the person's responsible for making or involved with making any type of harassing telephone call, even if the victim does not wish to pursue the complaint.**
- **The University Police WILL NOT investigate a complaint to simply provide the victim with caller information.**