

GARBAGE.TXT

Bell Trashing
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The Phone Co. will go to extremes on occasions. In fact, unless you really know what to expect from them, they will surprise the heck out of you with their "unpublished tariffs". Recently, a situation was brought to my attention that up till then I had been totally unaware of, least to mention, had any concern about. It involved garbage! The phone co. will go as far as to prosecute anyone who rummages through their garbage and helps himself to some

Of course, they have their reasons for this, and no doubt benefit from such action. But, why should they be so picky about garbage? The answer soon became clear to me: those huge metal bins are filled up with more than waste old food and refuse... Although it is Pacific Tele. policy to recycle paper waste products, sometimes employees do overlook this sacred operation when sorting the garbage. Thus top-secret confidential Phone Co. records go to the garbage bins instead of the paper shredders. Since it is constantly being updated with "company memorandums, and supplied with extensive reference material, the Phone co. must continually dispose of the outdated materials. Some phone companies are supplied each year with the complete "System Practices" guide. This publication is an over 40 foot long library of reference material about everything to do with telephones. As the new edition arrives each year, the old version of "System Practices" must also be thrown out.

I very quickly figured out where some local phone phreaks were getting their material. They crawl into the garbage bins and remove selected items that are of particular interest to them and their fellow phreaks. One phone phreak in the Los Angeles area has salvaged the complete 1972 edition of "Bell System Practices". It is so large and was out of order (the binders had been removed) that it took him over a year to sort it out and create enough shelving for it in his garage.

Much of this "Top Secret" information is so secret that most phone companies have no idea what is in their files. They have their hands full simply replacing everything each time a change in wording requires a new revision. It seems they waste more paper than they can read!

It took quite a while for Hollywood Cal traffic manager to figure out how all of the local phone phreaks constantly discovered the

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switchroom test numbers

Whenever someone wanted to use the testboard, they found the local phone phreaks on the lines talking to all points all over the world. It got to the point where the local garbage buffs knew more about the office operations than the employees themselves. One phreak went so far as to call in and tell a switchman what his next daily assignment would be. This, however, proved to be too much. The switchman traced the call and one phone phreak was denied the tool of his trade.

In another rather humorous incident, a fellow phreak was rumaging through the trash bin when he heard someone approaching. He pressed up against the side of the bin and silently waited for the goodies to come. You can imagine his surprise when the garbage from the lunchroom landed on his head. Most people find evenings best for checking out their local telco trash piles. The only thing necessary is a flashlight and, in the case mentioned above, possibly a rain coat. A word of warning though, before you rush out and dive into the trash heap. It is probably illegal, but no matter where you live, you certainly won't get the local policeman to hold your flashlight for you.

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