



An Extended Guide · No. 2008

# E-ZPass on the Ohio Turnpike: Accounts & Fake Toll Texts

---

Set up the real thing — and  
never click a scam toll text

**Tech Made Simple — Service Made Personal**

[BillsHomeTech.com](http://BillsHomeTech.com) · (330) 200-8042 · Atwater, Ohio

Free & printable — share it with someone who needs it



Book a visit —  
[billshometech.com/book](http://billshometech.com/book)

**! Read this first — that 'unpaid toll' text is a scam**

If you've gotten a text saying you owe a small unpaid toll and must pay through a link, delete it — it's a nationwide scam, and the FBI and FTC have warned about it. Real toll agencies don't demand payment through a surprise texted link; genuine notices come by mail or in your online account. Never tap the link. This guide covers both the real E-ZPass and the fake texts.

## E-ZPass and the Ohio Turnpike, made simple

An E-ZPass transponder lets you breeze through Ohio Turnpike tolls at a lower rate, with no cash and no stopping. This guide covers opening an account, mounting the transponder, and — importantly — spotting the fake toll-text scam that's everywhere.

I'm Bill, from Bill's Home Tech here in Portage County, Ohio. The Turnpike runs right through our part of the state, so E-ZPass is genuinely handy here — and those scam toll texts have been hitting a lot of my neighbors.

We'll set up the real thing calmly, explain the fees in plain terms (while being honest that exact amounts change), and make sure a fake text never fools you. No jargon.

**★ Want help setting up your account?**

If opening an E-ZPass account online feels fiddly, call or text me at (330) 200-8042 and we'll do it together — and I'll show you exactly how to spot the scam texts.

## The whole guide, on one page

The essentials, if you remember nothing else.

- ❑ E-ZPass is a small transponder that pays Ohio Turnpike tolls automatically, at a lower rate than paying by mail.
- ❑ Open an account at the Ohio Turnpike's official site or by phone; fund it with a prepaid balance.
- ❑ The transponder is leased — it's theirs, and you return it if you close the account.
- ❑ There may be a small monthly lease fee per transponder, often waived if you drive enough; exact amounts change, so check the official site.
- ❑ Those 'unpaid toll' texts with a link are a SCAM — never click.
- ❑ Check or pay real tolls only at the agency's official website or your account.

### ✓ The golden rule on toll texts

A real toll bill never arrives as a surprise text demanding you click a link to pay. If you get one, it's a scam — delete it, and check your actual account directly if you're unsure.

## What E-ZPass actually is

A simple picture before we set it up.

E-ZPass is a small electronic tag — a 'transponder' — that mounts inside your windshield. As you drive through an Ohio Turnpike toll point, a reader overhead communicates with the tag and deducts the toll from your prepaid account, so you don't stop for cash or a ticket. The same tag works on toll roads across many states in the E-ZPass network.

Besides the convenience, E-ZPass users pay a lower toll on the Ohio Turnpike than drivers who get a bill in the mail based on their license plate — the Turnpike points to meaningful average savings for E-ZPass. For regular Turnpike travelers, it pays off in both time and money.

### ✓ One tag, many states

Your Ohio E-ZPass works on E-ZPass toll roads throughout much of the country, so it's handy well beyond the Ohio Turnpike. One small tag covers a lot of ground.

## Opening an Ohio Turnpike E-ZPass account

A few ways to do it, all official.

- Online at the Ohio Turnpike's official E-ZPass website (type it in yourself; don't follow a link from a text).
- By phone with the Ohio Turnpike's customer service line.
- By mail, or in person at a Turnpike service plaza or a participating retail location.
- You'll provide your vehicle and license plate info and set up a prepaid balance with a card on file.

A retail-bought transponder usually needs to be activated (online or by phone) before it works; one ordered online or by mail typically arrives ready to go. Either way, you're setting up an account that the tolls draw from.

### **! Go to the official site yourself**

Set up and manage your E-ZPass only through the Ohio Turnpike's official website or phone line, which you look up yourself — never through a link in a text or email. Copycat 'toll' sites exist to steal payments.

## The fees, honestly

Here's the shape of the costs — with a caution about exact numbers.

An Ohio Turnpike E-ZPass account generally involves a prepaid balance you keep funded (it replenishes from your card when it runs low), a small one-time activation or shipping charge for the transponder, and a modest recurring per-transponder lease fee that is often waived in any month you take enough trips. There may also be a charge if you don't return the leased transponder when closing the account.

I'm not going to quote exact dollar amounts, because the Turnpike adjusts them and I'd rather you have the right number than a stale one. For the current fees, deposit, and any monthly charge, check the Ohio Turnpike's official E-ZPass fee page or ask their customer service.

### ✓ Check the current numbers at the source

Fees change. For today's exact figures — the monthly lease fee, the activation charge, the minimum balance — look at the Ohio Turnpike's official E-ZPass page. That's the one place that's always right.

## The transponder: mounting and returning it

A small tag with a couple of things worth knowing.

The standard Ohio transponder mounts inside your windshield, typically up behind the rearview mirror, using the adhesive strips provided. Follow the enclosed instructions for exact placement so the overhead readers catch it cleanly. Keep it out of the way of your view.

Remember the transponder is leased, not sold — it remains the Turnpike's property. If you ever close your account, you return it (or you may be charged for not returning it). Treat it as borrowed equipment that lives in your car.

### ✓ Mount it per the instructions

Placing the tag exactly where the instructions say — usually high on the windshield behind the mirror — helps the readers catch it every time, so you glide through without a missed-toll hassle.

## Keeping your account funded

A prepaid balance keeps the tolls flowing — here's how it works.

Your account carries a prepaid balance that tolls draw from. When it drops to a set low point, it automatically tops up by charging the card you keep on file, so you rarely have to think about it. You can also add money yourself anytime through your online account or by phone.

Keep the card on file current — an expired card can cause a failed replenishment and a missed-toll notice. Checking your account now and then, and updating the card when you get a new one, keeps everything smooth.

### ✓ Update the card when it's reissued

The most common cause of an E-ZPass hiccup is an expired card on file. When your card is replaced, pop into your online account and update it, and your balance will keep topping up on its own.

## The fake toll-text scam — what it looks like

This is the part I most want you to remember, because it's everywhere.

The scam is a text (sometimes an email) claiming you have a small unpaid toll — often around ten or twelve dollars — and threatening a late fee or even a license or registration problem if you don't pay right away through a link. The link leads to a convincing fake of an E-ZPass or toll agency page that steals your card details and personal information.

The FBI's complaint center warned about this scheme back in 2024, and the FTC issued a consumer alert the same year; it has rolled from state to state ever since. The messages often come from odd or out-of-country phone numbers, and the web address is never the real agency's.

### **! Real tolls don't arrive as a surprise texted link**

Legitimate toll agencies send genuine notices by mail or post them in your online account — they don't text you out of the blue demanding payment through a link. Any such text is a scam. Don't click, don't reply.

## What to do when you get one

Simple steps that protect you and help shut the scam down.

- Don't click the link, don't reply, and don't call any number in the message.
- If you're unsure whether you really owe a toll, check by going to the Ohio Turnpike's official site yourself or calling their published number.
- Report it: forward the text to 7726 (which spells SPAM), and file at [ic3.gov](https://ic3.gov) (the FBI) and [reportfraud.ftc.gov](https://reportfraud.ftc.gov) (the FTC).
- Delete the message.

If you did click and entered any card or personal details, treat it like a scam you fell for: call your bank, watch your accounts, and consider freezing your credit. Our 'first hour' guide walks through all of that.

### ✓ Forward to 7726 and delete

Forwarding the scam text to 7726 reports it to your phone carrier, who uses it to block these numbers. Then delete it. Two taps that help everyone.

## Two ways people come to this — and both are fine

Some folks want to set up E-ZPass for regular Turnpike trips; others mainly just keep getting those scam texts and want to know what to do. Both are covered here.

### If you drive the Turnpike regularly

E-ZPass saves you money and time on every trip.

- Open an account through the official Ohio Turnpike site and fund it.
- Mount the transponder as instructed and keep your card on file current.
- Check your account online now and then, and ignore any toll texts.

### If you just keep getting scam texts

You may not even use the Turnpike much — you just want the texts to stop fooling you.

- Know that real tolls never come as a surprise texted link.
- Don't click; forward to 7726 and report to the FBI and FTC.
- If worried you owe something, check the official site directly.

#### ★ Either way, I can help

Whether you want E-ZPass set up or just peace of mind about the scam texts, I'm glad to help. Call (330) 200-8042.

## E-ZPass vs. getting a bill in the mail

If you skip E-ZPass, here's what happens instead — and why it costs more.

Without a transponder, the Turnpike photographs your license plate and mails a toll bill to the registered owner. That's a legitimate system, but the plate-by-mail toll is higher than the E-ZPass rate, and the real bill comes by mail — not by text. For occasional trips it's fine; for regular travel, E-ZPass saves money.

This is also why the scam texts are so effective: people know plate-based billing exists, so a 'you owe a toll' message feels plausible. The difference is that the real one arrives by mail or in your account, never as a link-laden text.

### ✓ Regular driver? E-ZPass pays off

If you're on the Turnpike more than occasionally, the lower E-ZPass toll and the convenience usually outweigh the small account fees. Do the math with the current numbers from the official site.

## Managing your account online

A little upkeep keeps everything running smoothly.

- ❑ Log in to your official Ohio Turnpike E-ZPass account now and then to check your balance and trips.
- ❑ Keep the card on file current so auto-replenishment doesn't fail.
- ❑ Update your vehicle info if you change cars or plates.
- ❑ Add a transponder if you get another vehicle, and remove ones you no longer use.
- ❑ Use a strong password and, if offered, extra security on the account.

### ★ I'll help you log in and check

If you're not sure how to get into your E-ZPass account online, I'm glad to help you log in, check your balance, and make sure your card is current. Call (330) 200-8042.

## Other toll-related scams to know

The texts are the big one, but a couple of cousins are worth naming.

- **Fake 'toll agency' websites** in search results, named to look official, that take your payment. Type the real .gov or official address yourself.
- **Phone calls** claiming you owe tolls and demanding immediate payment or gift cards — always a scam.
- **Emails** with the same unpaid-toll story and a link — same scam, different mailbox.

The through-line is always the same: a demand to pay a toll right now through a link, a call, or a strange method. Real tolls are handled calmly through your account or a mailed bill, never under pressure.

### ! Pressure plus a link equals scam

Whether by text, email, or phone, any urgent demand to pay a toll through a link or an odd method is a scam. The real agency doesn't rush you or threaten your license over a few dollars.

## Common mistakes

Avoid these and E-ZPass stays easy and safe.

- **Clicking a toll text** 'just to check' — never click; verify on the official site instead.
- **Setting up through a link** from a message instead of the official site.
- **Letting the card on file expire**, causing a failed replenishment.
- **Mounting the transponder wrong**, leading to missed-toll notices.
- **Not returning a transponder** when closing the account.

### ! The costly click

Clicking a scam toll text and entering your card is the mistake that hurts. If you're ever unsure whether you owe a toll, close the message and go to the official Turnpike site yourself — never through the text.

## If you clicked a scam toll link

Don't panic — act, in order.

If you clicked and entered your card or personal details, treat it as a scam you fell for. Call your bank using the number on your card, tell them the card may be compromised, and ask about replacing it and watching for fraud. Change any password you may have entered, and if you gave out your Social Security number, consider freezing your credit.

Then report the scam to the FBI at [ic3.gov](https://ic3.gov) and the FTC at [reportfraud.ftc.gov](https://reportfraud.ftc.gov). Our 'sent money to the wrong person or a scammer' guide walks through the full first-hour plan if money actually moved.

### ★ Clicked one? Call me

If you entered anything on a fake toll site, speed helps. Call (330) 200-8042 and I'll help you lock down your card and accounts calmly.

## Helping a relative with E-ZPass and the scams

Two gifts here: the convenience, and the scam-proofing.

If a relative drives the Turnpike, help them open an account through the official site, mount the transponder, and set up auto-replenishment with a current card. But spend the real time on the scam texts: show them a real example, and drill the rule that a genuine toll never arrives as a surprise text demanding a click.

Write it on a card by the phone: 'Toll texts = scam. Never click. If worried, check the official site or call Bill.' That single note can save them from a very common and costly trap.

### ★ I coach relatives on the toll scam

Helping a parent set up E-ZPass and, more importantly, recognize the scam texts for what they are is a valuable little visit. Call (330) 200-8042.

## Using your Ohio E-ZPass elsewhere

Your tag travels well — with a couple of things to keep in mind.

Because Ohio is part of the broader E-ZPass network, your transponder works on many toll roads and bridges in other states, which is handy for a road trip. The tolls still draw from your Ohio account, so keep it funded before a long drive.

Not every state's tolls are on the E-ZPass network, though, so on an unfamiliar route you might also encounter plate-based tolling. If so, the real bill comes by mail — and, you guessed it, any 'unpaid toll' text about that trip is still a scam.

### ✓ Top up before a road trip

Heading out of state on toll roads? Add a little to your E-ZPass balance first so a long drive doesn't drain it and trigger a low-balance notice mid-trip.

## A simple, safe routine

A little regular habit keeps E-ZPass smooth and scams powerless.

- ❑ Keep my prepaid balance funded and the card on file current.
- ❑ Check my account on the official site now and then.
- ❑ Treat every 'unpaid toll' text as a scam — never click.
- ❑ Verify any real toll question by going to the official site myself.
- ❑ Forward scam texts to 7726 and delete them.

### ★ I'll set the routine up with you

A quick sit-down to check your account, update your card, and lock in the scam-text habit keeps everything running. Call (330) 200-8042.

## Your E-ZPass checklist

The whole guide, boiled down.

- ☐ Account opened through the official Ohio Turnpike site or phone line.
- ☐ Transponder mounted per the instructions.
- ☐ Prepaid balance funded; card on file current.
- ☐ I checked the current fees on the official site (they change).
- ☐ I know 'unpaid toll' texts are scams and never click them.
- ☐ I report scam texts to 7726, ic3.gov, and reportfraud.ftc.gov.

### ★ Want help with any of it?

Setup, fees, or the scam texts — call (330) 200-8042 and we'll sort whichever part you need.

## Common Questions

The E-ZPass and toll-scam questions I hear most, answered plainly.

### **Q: Is that 'unpaid toll' text real?**

No — it's a nationwide scam the FBI and FTC have warned about. Real toll notices come by mail or in your online account, never as a surprise text demanding you click a link. Don't click; delete it.

### **Q: How do I open an Ohio Turnpike E-ZPass account?**

Through the Ohio Turnpike's official E-ZPass website or phone line, or in person at a service plaza or retail location. Type the site in yourself — never set up through a link in a text.

### **Q: What does E-ZPass cost?**

There's a prepaid balance, a small one-time activation charge, and a modest per-transponder monthly lease fee that's often waived with enough trips. Exact amounts change, so check the Ohio Turnpike's official fee page for current figures.

### **Q: Is E-ZPass cheaper than paying by mail?**

Yes — the Ohio Turnpike's E-ZPass toll is lower than the plate-by-mail toll, and the Turnpike cites meaningful average savings. For regular drivers it pays off.

### **Q: I clicked a toll text and entered my card — now what?**

Call your bank using the number on your card, have the card watched or replaced, change any password you entered, and report the scam at [ic3.gov](https://ic3.gov) and [reportfraud.ftc.gov](https://reportfraud.ftc.gov). Act quickly.

#### **★ Still have a question?**

Call or text me at (330) 200-8042 and I'll explain it plainly — and help you tell the real toll system from the scams.

## The quick recap

E-ZPass and toll scams in one glance.

- ❑ E-ZPass pays Turnpike tolls automatically, at a lower rate.
- ❑ Open and manage it only on the official Ohio Turnpike site.
- ❑ The transponder is leased — mount it right, return it if you close.
- ❑ Keep your balance funded and your card current.
- ❑ Check current fees at the source — they change.
- ❑ 'Unpaid toll' texts are scams — never click.
- ❑ Report scam texts to 7726, [ic3.gov](https://ic3.gov), and [reportfraud.ftc.gov](https://reportfraud.ftc.gov).

### ✓ Real tolls are quiet

The real toll system is calm: a tag, a balance, maybe a mailed bill. Anything that texts you a link and rushes you is a scam.

## You don't have to do this alone

You just have to remember that a friendly, patient person is one call away.

I hope this guide made setting up E-ZPass and spotting toll-text scams feel a little less daunting and a lot more doable. Keep it in a drawer with your other home papers, come back to a page whenever you need it, and don't worry about memorizing anything.

When you'd rather have a hand, that's exactly what I do. I come to your home, work at your pace, and never make you feel rushed or silly for asking. A first visit is a flat \$99, and for the parts that don't need me on-site I can often help right on your screen for \$49. Every visit comes with a 30-day, come-back-free guarantee. I'm a tech helper, not a bank, a lawyer, or a financial advisor — for disputes, taxes, or legal questions I'll help you reach the right people and prepare what you need.

### ★ Bill's Home Tech — real help, close to home

Call or text me at (330) 200-8042, or visit BillsHomeTech.com. Serving Atwater and all of Portage County. 30+ years of patient, plain-English tech help — and if you're ever not 100% happy with a visit, I'll make it right or refund it. That's a promise. — Bill

# Real Toll vs. Scam Text

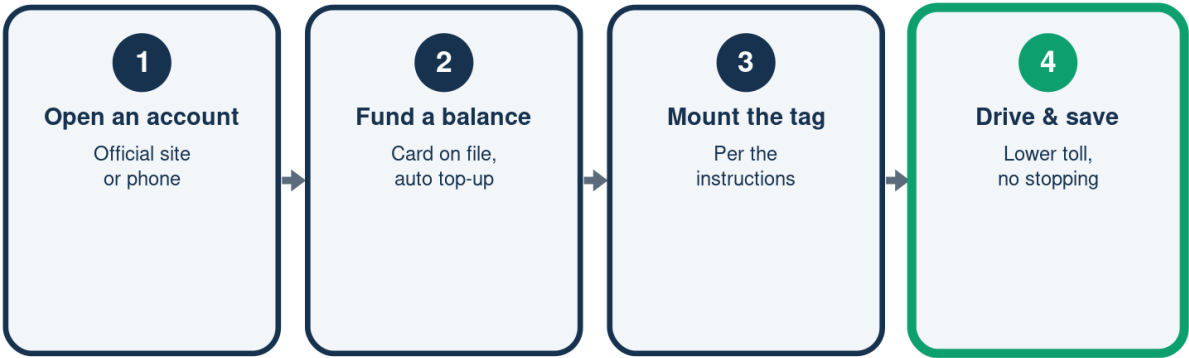
How to tell them apart in a glance

|                    | Real toll           | Scam text           |
|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| How it reaches you | Mail or account     | Surprise text       |
| Asks you to        | Log in yourself     | Click a link now    |
| Tone               | Calm                | Urgent, threatening |
| Your move          | Check official site | Delete it           |

Real tolls never arrive as a surprise text demanding a click.

## Setting Up E-ZPass

All through the official Turnpike



Set up only via the official site -- never a link from a text.

# Got a Toll Text?

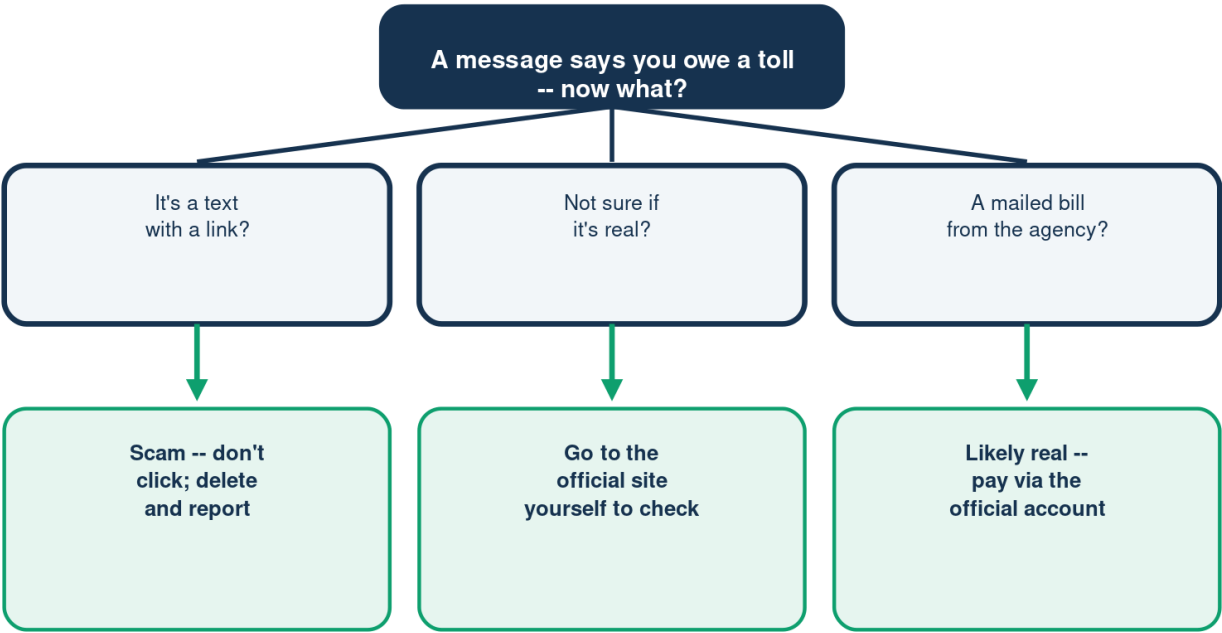
Four safe moves



Forwarding to 7726 helps your carrier block the scam numbers.

# Do I Really Owe a Toll?

A calm way to check



When in doubt, never use the message -- open the official site yourself.

Illustration - a schematic, not to scale. Your setup may differ.



## Need a Real Person?

You do not have to remember all of it.  
You just have to remember you can call.  
Friendly, in-home tech help -- I come to you.

### BILL'S PROMISE

If you are not 100% happy with a visit, I will  
make it right -- or refund it. No awkwardness,  
no fine print. That is how I would want to be treated.

**(330) 200-8042 · BillsHomeTech.com**

Bill@BillsHomeTech.com · Mon–Sat 9:00 AM – 7:30 PM

— Bill

---

### Prefer help without a visit?

Bill can screen-share and fix many things remotely — a flat \$49, free for Support Plan members.



## A Note From Bill

### A quick note from Bill.

I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that comes from using these guides. Thanks for reading, and stay safe out there.

— *Bill*



Book a visit —  
[billshometech.com/book](https://billshometech.com/book)

Use of these guides is subject to our Terms of Use ([billshometech.com/terms-of-use](https://billshometech.com/terms-of-use)).

**(330) 200-8042 · BillsHomeTech.com**

Bill@BillsHomeTech.com · Mon–Sat 9:00 AM – 7:30 PM

For general information only — not professional advice. Use at your own risk. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech