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WhatsApp Warns that Google Drive Backups are not Encrypted

Facebook-owned WhatsApp has recently announced that, starting on November 12, 2018, Android users will be able to store their WhatsApp backups on Google Drive without the backup being counted toward Google Drive's storage quota. But, the company warns, those backups won't be encrypted. That means that the chats, photos and videos sent via the app and backed up on Google Drive are accessible to Google, but also to hackers that manage to compromise users' Google Drive account. According to the new agreement, WhatsApp backups that haven't been updated in more than one year will also be automatically removed from Google Drive storage. WhatsApp has long allowed people to store their messages in Google Drive, but they counted towards users' Google Drive storage limit. "You can back up your chats and media to Google Drive, so if you change Android phones or get a new one, your chats and media are transferrable," the company explains in its FAQ document. To protect their backups on Google Drive, users are advised to set up a strong (long, complex and unique) password for the account and to take advantage of the two-factor authentication option provided by Google.