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Dickinson, ND 58601
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www.ctctel.com



Consolidated

Reach the World, from here.

May 13, 2005

South Dakota Public Utilities Commission
Capitol Bldg. 1st Floor
500 E. Capitol Ave.
Pierre, SD 57501-5070

RECEIVED
MAY 16 2005
SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC
UTILITIES COMMISSION

RE: TC05-058 Lifeline and Link-Up

Dear Commissioners:

Per your request, we have verified that we have no Lifeline/LinkUp subscribers in the South Dakota exchanges that are served by Consolidated Telcom. We serve the following South Dakota customers:

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------|
| 1. South Scranton, SD | 32 |
| 2. South Ladd, SD | 53 |
| 3. South Hettinger, SD | 97 |
| 4. South Reeder, SD | <u>61</u> |
| Total SD customers | 243 |

The North Dakota Association of Telephone Cooperatives is holding a workshop to assist the ND Telco's meet the federally mandated June deadline requirements which we will be attending to ensure compliance. While Consolidated has advertised and marketed this program since 2003, we will be expanding our efforts to ensure reaching as many eligible customers as possible.

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| • October 2003 | Article in newsletter which is mailed to every Member |
| • December 2003 | Page dedicated to this program in the lead-in pages of The Badlands Consolidated Telephone Directory |
| • August 2004 | FRS mailer sent to all PO Box holders on Native American Reservations, Tribal Authority Offices |
| • November 2004 | Article in newsletter which is mailed to every Member |
| • December 2004 | Page dedicated to this program in the lead-in pages of the Badlands Consolidated Telephone Directory |
| • June 2005 | FRS mailer will be sent to all Social Services offices in every exchange we serve seeking their assistance with income eligible clients. |

I will follow up this letter with additional information as soon as we have attended the workshop and formulated additional plans for compliance. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Rhonda Dukart,
Public Relations Manager, Consolidated Telcom

*Consolidated
Telcom*

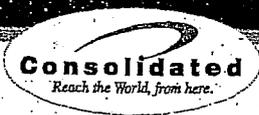
*Consolidated
Enterprises, Inc.*

*Consolidated
Communications
Corporation*

*Consolidated
Cable Vision, Inc.*

*Consolidated
Communications
Networks, Inc.*

Tribal Areas Assistance



Cant Afford Telephone Service?

Link Up and **Lifeline** Programs for Tribal areas can help.

Home Telephone Assistance: These programs all eligible persons on tribal lands to receive local telephone service for \$1.00 a month plus taxes. They also offer assistance with telephone service hook up costs.

Link Up -- Assists with initial hook up charges for primary telephone service \$100.00 maximum. Telephone company may set up a payment plan on the balance and waive interest. Contact your local telephone company to find out if you qualify for hook up service without a deposit.

Lifeline-- Provides primary local telephone service for \$1.00 a month plus taxes for eligible persons. Applies only to primary local telephone service in the home.

Who is Eligible?

Residents of tribal lands whose income is equal to or less than 195% of the federal poverty guidelines.

OR Residents of tribal lands participating in at least one of the following programs: BIA General Assistance, Food Distribution Program, Food Stamps benefit recipient, Head Start or Early Head Start (only those meeting its income qualifying standard), Heating Assistance, Medicaid, National School Free Lunch Program, WIC, SSI, TANF, or the North Dakota Healthy Steps - Children's Health Insurance Plan (CHIP).

Note: If you have been disconnected for non payment of telephone bills, these programs are available to you if you bring you local bill current, you may be required to pay a reconnect fee.

How to Obtain the Telephone Services:

You may self certify at your local telephone office that you qualify for one of the above programs.

OR When you qualify for any programs administered through your county social services office you will automatically receive a Qualifying Certificate within a month by mail. Provide the Qualifying Certificate to your local telephone company and do the necessary paperwork.

OR When you qualify for any programs administered by tribal offices, the tribal program administrator can provide verification of eligibility to the telephone company. Contact the telephone company to do the necessary paperwork.

How long will these benefits continue?

If you no longer meet the eligibility guidelines above, you no longer qualify for Link Up or Lifeline.

For more information on Link Up and Lifeline, please contact you local phone company.

North Dakota Public Service Commission, 600 East Boulevard Avenue, Dept 408, Bismarck, ND 58505-0480, 701-328-2400, sab@oracle.psc.state.nd.us

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HOLIDAY Open House and Toy Drive!

Bring a gift of a NEW, unwrapped toy which will be distributed to needy children in Southwest ND.

Those who bring a toy will have their name entered in a drawing for a NEW TELEVISION.

Drawing to be held on December 22nd.

HOLIDAY

2003

Join Us on

December 4th

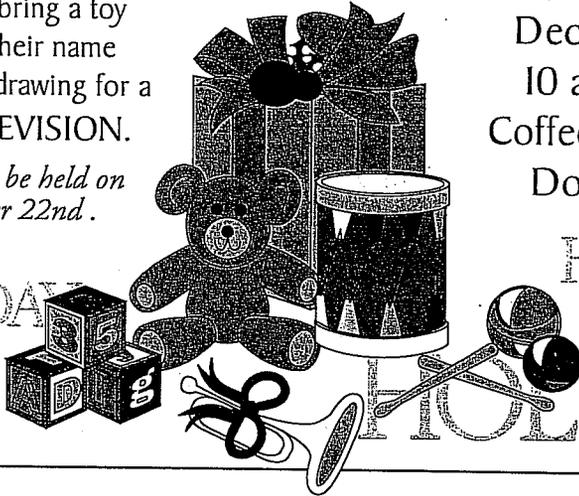
10 am - 4 pm

Coffee & Cookies

Door Prizes

HOLIDAY

HOLIDAY



HOLIDAY

Did You Know?



TRIBAL AREA ASSISTANCE

is available for those who cannot afford telephone service. Residents of tribal lands may qualify for assistance in getting telephone service. If you know someone who cannot afford telephone service, please encourage them to call the Consolidated office to see if they qualify for *Link Up* or *Lifeline* federal programs adopted by the North Dakota Public Service Commission.

An Official Publication of Consolidated, Dickinson, ND • Editor, Rhonda Dukart • Design, Leutz Graphics

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Reach the World, from here.
P.O. Box 1408
Dickinson, ND 58602

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HOLIDAY HOLIDAY

Open House & Toy Drive!

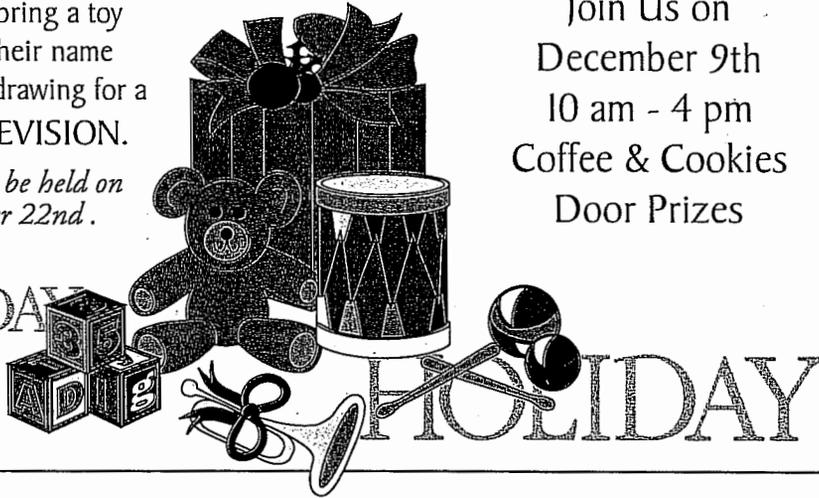
Bring a gift of a NEW, unwrapped toy which will be distributed to needy children in southwestern ND.

Those who bring a toy will have their name entered in a drawing for a NEW TELEVISION.

Drawing to be held on December 22nd.

2004

Join Us on
December 9th
10 am - 4 pm
Coffee & Cookies
Door Prizes



HOLIDAY

HOLIDAY



Did You Know?

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Every person in America should have access to quality, affordable telecommunications service. This principle of "Universal Service" has been the goal of the telecommunications industry for decades. In 1934, the federal government codified the goal and reaffirmed it in 1996 by establishing policies for the "preservation and advancement of Universal Service."

To achieve the Universal Service goal, carriers have access to a fund that is generated by contributions from the telecommunications providers in the United States. Telecommunications companies draw from the fund to provide four programs that support telecommunications services nationwide. Link-Up America (Link-Up) and the Lifeline Assistance Program (Lifeline) are part of the fund's Low-Income Program and are described in detail below. Toll limitation service is another program available to low income subscribers to help them control what they spend on telephone service.

Lifeline, Link Up, and Toll Limitation Service support provide discounts to eligible low-income consumers to help them establish and maintain telephone service.

What type of discount is available?

Lifeline assistance lowers the cost of basic monthly local telephone service. Eligible consumers can receive up to \$10 per month in discounts. Additional state support also may be available.

Eligible residents of Indian reservations or tribal lands can receive up to an additional \$25 in Lifeline support, but must pay at least \$1 for basic monthly service.

Link Up reduces the cost of initiating new telephone service. Eligible consumers can receive a 50% discount off of the one-time costs associated with initiating telephone service, up to a maximum of \$30. Eligible consumers also qualify for a deferred payment schedule for remaining costs of up to \$200.

Eligible low-income consumers living on tribal lands are eligible for an additional discount of up to \$70 to cover 100% of the charges between \$60 and \$130.

Toll Limitation Service (TLS) support allows eligible consumers who wish to avoid incurring large long distance fees to choose toll blocking or toll control at no cost.

How do I know whether I am eligible?

Eligibility for Lifeline, Link Up and TLS support varies by state. Individuals who reside in states that have their own discount programs qualify for federal Lifeline, Link Up and TLS support if they meet the eligibility criteria established by their state. In states that do not provide state support, an individual is eligible if he or she participates in one of the following programs:

- ✓ • Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- ✓ • Federal Public Housing Assistance or Section 8
- ✓ • Medicaid
- ✓ • Food Stamps
- ✓ • Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- ✓ • Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- ✓ • National School Lunch free lunch program

→ Income Qualification 15
 In addition, a consumer ~~may~~ be eligible if his or her household income is at or below 135% of the federal poverty guidelines:

2004 Income Requirements — 48 Contiguous States

Family Size	States & DC	Alaska	Hawaii
1	\$12,569	\$15,701	\$14,445
2	\$16,862	\$21,074	\$19,386
3	\$21,155	\$26,447	\$24,327
4	\$25,448	\$31,820	\$29,268
5	\$29,741	\$37,193	\$34,209
6	\$34,034	\$42,566	\$39,150
7	\$38,327	\$47,939	\$44,091
8	\$42,620	\$53,312	\$49,032
For each additional person add	\$4,293	\$5,373	\$4,941

Need 2005 #'s



Income-based criteria will be in effect for all telephone companies that offer Lifeline beginning in June 2005. Some telephone companies may offer Lifeline discounts to individuals who qualify based on household income before that date.

Residents of Indian reservations or tribal lands qualify if they participate in any of the programs listed above, have a household income that is at or below 135% of the federal poverty guidelines, or participate in one of these programs:

- Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) general assistance
- Head Start (income eligible)
- Tribal TANF

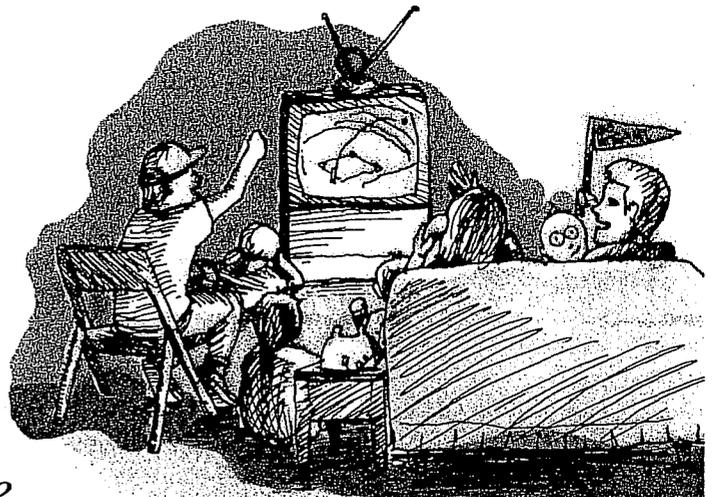
How do I apply to receive Lifeline, Link Up and TLS support discounts?

Consumers must apply through their local telephone company — please let us know if you are interested in any of these programs. Visit the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) web site at www.lifelinesupport.org for more information about eligibility requirements. You also may call USAC toll free at 1-888-641-8722, with any questions about Lifeline, Link Up and TLS discounts.

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM YOUR
COMMUNITY BASED TELECOM PROVIDER

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM YOUR
COMMUNITY BASED TELECOM PROVIDER

Yes,
You Can Afford
Telephone Service



-----Original Message-----

From: Paul Schuetzler

Sent: Wednesday, May 04, 2005 4:50 PM

To: Ken Weisenberger; Rhonda Dukart; ReAnn Kautzman; Bryan Personne

Subject: FW: NDATC LIFELINE AND LINK-UP WORKSHOP...MAY 24TH...PLEASE CONFIRM

-----Original Message-----

From: d. crothers [mailto:dcrothers@yahoo.com]

Sent: Monday, May 02, 2005 2:49 PM

To: Keith Anderson; Royce Aslakson; Ray Brown; Ken Carlson; Dave Dircks;
Dave Dunning; Mick Grosz; Steve Lysne; Jeff Olson; Dwight Schmidt; Paul
Schuetzler; Paul Schuetzler; Mark Wilhelmi; don negaard; Jim Simonson;
aaa.crothers@ndatc.com

Cc: aa-carla

Subject: NDATC LIFELINE AND LINK-UP WORKSHOP...MAY 24TH...PLEASE CONFIRM

Gentlemen:

The Association has scheduled a Lifeline and Link-Up Workshop for you and your employees on Tuesday, May 24th at the Statewide Headquarters in Mandan.

Please see the attachment for details and your need to respond with whom will be attending from your company. Also, we ask you for your thoughts on what should be included in the presentation.

Best wishes. We look forward to seeing you in Mandan on the 24th. Carla will be FAXing you a copy of the memo, as well.

David Crothers

Note: forwarded message attached.



NORTH DAKOTA ASSOCIATION OF
TELECOMMUNICATIONS COOPERATIVES

P.O. Box 1144 • Mandan, ND 58554
Phone 701-663-1099 • Fax 701-663-0707
www.ndatc.com

May 3, 2005

To: Manager
 Office Manager

From: David Crothers, Executive Vice President

Re: Lifeline and Link-Up Workshop

The North Dakota Association of Telecommunications Cooperatives will be hosting a Lifeline and Link-Up Workshop at the Statewide Headquarters in Mandan on Tuesday, May 24th. We encourage everyone in your office that works with the program to attend the event.

The meeting will begin at 9:00 a.m. in the Chub Ulmer Center at Statewide Headquarters. Lunch will be served at noon and we will go back into session if there is unfinished business.

Recent changes by the Federal Communications Commission and North Dakota legislature have substantially and materially altered the program, as well as the responsibilities of independent telephone companies for participation in Lifeline and Link-Up. Your obligations to monitor, verify and report will increase dramatically on June 23rd.

It is the consensus of the Association's membership that a "workshop" format would be the most beneficial for all of us. Many of the telcos are using forms and procedures that all North Dakota companies would benefit from. We would like the full input of all attendees in the discussions and sharing their thoughts on administering the program. Ideally, at the conclusion of the meeting we will have "uniform" forms and a thorough discussion of "best practices" for operating Lifeline and Link-Up at your company.

One of the critical elements of the workshop will be the review of existing forms and suggestions for revising it to meet our future needs. Also, your company's "outreach" efforts, whether it be newspaper advertising, bill stuffers, other printed material and other efforts will need to be enhanced and reported to the

FCC. For that reason, we would ask that you send all of your existing forms and examples of your outreach efforts to Don Negaard as soon as possible. Mr. Negaard will be leading the discussion on developing a "state plan" for all of the telephone companies to use. Please mail your materials to:

Mr. Don Negaard
Pringle Herigstad Law Firm
P.O. Box 1000
Minot, N.D. 58702-1000

Finally, the format of the workshop is still being developed to ensure that it is the most comprehensive as possible. Please let me know on what issues you would most like to see addressed during the meeting. I would also appreciate your suggestions for any speakers. Currently, Ron Knutson of the North Dakota Department of Human Services, Mick Grosz of West River Telecommunications Cooperative and Mr. Negaard will be presenters during the workshop.

Please forward at your earliest convenience the names of the attendees from your company so that we can have an accurate count for lunch and materials. If you have any questions about the program or anything else, please contact me.

In addition to your office manager and appropriate staff, it would be great if you were able to attend as well.

DC:cs