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May 18, 2005

08416-003 Ms. Pamela Bonrud Executive Director S.D. Public Utilities Commission 500 E. Capitol Ave. Pierre, SD 57501

Re:

Docket Number TC05-058

Dear Ms. Bonrud:

Enclosed is an original and ten copies of James Valley Cooperative Telephone Company's Lifeline and Link-up Submissions.

Sincerely,

JAMES M. CREMER

JMC:tmb

JMC:\VT\Lifeline & Link-up\Bonrud 2005-05-18

Enclosures

pc James Groft

# BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE MATTER OF THE REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION OF FCC REQUIREMENTS FOR LIFELINE AND LINK-UP PROGRAMS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF ADDITIONAL OUTREACH EFFORTS Docket No. TC05-058

JAMES VALLEY
COOPERATIVE TELEPHONE
COMPANY'S LIFELINE AND
LINK-UP SUBMISSIONS

Pursuant to the April 15, 2005, Order Opening Docket and Requesting Information, James Valley Cooperative Telephone Company hereby submits the following:

- 1. Lifeline and link-up forms and promotional material. See documents attached hereto as **Numbers 1-11**.
- 2. Description of how James Valley Cooperative Telephone Company advertises lifeline and link-up and how often it advertises. See documents attached hereto as **Numbers 1-11.** These materials are provided in the customer newsletter, the phone directory and on customer bills all once a year.
- 3. Implementation of the new certification procedures. See attached document **Number 12.**
- 4. Implementation of the new verification procedures. See attached document **Number 12.**

Dated this 18<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2005.

BANTZ, GOSCH & CREMER, L.L.C.

James M. Cremer

Attorney for James Valley Cooperative

Telephone Company

P. O. Box 970

Aberdeen, South Dakota 57402-0970

Telephone (605) 225-2232

# James Valley Telecommunications

## Lifeline / Link-Up Promotional Material

- 1. Customer Newsletter Notification received by all members, one time per year (sample enclosed)
- 2. Phone Directory received by all members (copy enclosed)
- 3. Bill Print Message on all members' bills one time per year (sample enclosed)

# NEWSLETTER OLLO

Vol. 52

May 2005

No. 459

# JVT ANNUAL MEETING THURSDAY, MAY 26

Groton High School Gym and Arena 5:00pm-6:30pm - Registration & Dinner 5:00pm-6:30pm - Booths/Exhibits 6:30pm - Business Meeting

Bring the whole family, free childcare provided!

\*\* MANY GREAT DOOR PRIZES \*\*

# Busing Schedule

How about a ride to the annual meeting? JVT will be offering free bus rides for members - the schedule and locations for pick-up are listed below.

It's not too late to sign up for a ride! Call us at 611 as soon as possible so we can get your name on the list.

_	•	
<u>Town</u>	Place	<u>Time</u>
Bristol	Bristol School	4:45pm
Andover	Main St by Andover Cafe	5:00pm
Frederick	Frederick School	4:00pm
Hecla	Community Center	4:30pm
Columbia	Bdwy St by K L Cabin	5:00pm
Doland	Doland School	4:15pm
Turton	By Farmer's State Bank	4:30pm
Conde	By Plains Commerce Bank	4:45pm
Mellette	Northwestern School	4:30pm
Brentford	Legion	4:45pm
Stratford	By B S Bar & Grill	5:00pm
Ferney	By Harry Implements	5:15pm

#### \*PLEASE NOTE\*

The buses have to stay on schedule. Drivers will not be able to wait for riders who are not there at the pick-up times listed above.



# Director and sales in the control of the control of

Current directors Roger Zastrow (District 1), Bill Ewalt (District 4), and Bill Troske (District 7) are all running unopposed for the open board seats. Each director will be reelected at the annual meeting for a term of 3 years.



Roger Zastrow

Other plans are currently underway for the meeting to be held in the Groton gym and arena. Watch for your annual meeting notice which will be sent out early this month.

In addition to being the official notice of the meeting, these reports contain the meeting agenda, minutes from last year's meeting, the cooperative's financial statement, summaries from the board president and general manager, and staff and board pictures.



Bill Ewalt

Free baby-sitting will be provided again this year so members are encouraged to bring their children. In past years 20-30 children have taken part on the games and activities that are provided for them. Each child also will receive a free coloring book and other gifts.



Bill Troske

Many door prizes will be given away at the meeting, with the main prize being a \$500 credit on your JVT account! Last year over 30 prizes were given away. In addition, each family receives a gift at the registration table.

See you on May 26!

JVI's office will be closed on Monday: May 30 for Memorial Day



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## WEB DESIGNER HIRED

Josh Phillips was recently hired as JVT's second web designer and will be working out of the Aberdeen office, aiding in the maintenance and design of websites for new and existing customers.

Phillips, originally an Aberdeen native, started his position in March after graduating from Southeast Technical Institute in Sioux Falls where he received an Associates Degree in

Applied Science for Graphic Communications. Welcome Josh!!!

The Web Department is supervised by Jason Kranhold and includes two website designers, Phillips and Jennifer Bergeron, and a hosting technician, Jason Board.

Visit www.portalwebhosting.com for more information regarding website hosting and domain name registration services.

Check out www.nvc.net/design.html for information regarding website design services and a list of sample sites designed by our web department.



In early April, JVT manager Groft and directors Jark, Wattier, and Zastrow attended the National Telecommunications Cooperative Assoc. Legislative Conference in Washington, DC, along with 30 other telecommunications officials from South Dakota.

This annual gathering of telecommunications officials from across the nation gives JVT an opportunity to discuss pertinent communications issues with members of Congress. As we spent time on Capitol Hill, three issues topped our agenda: 1) inter-carrier compensation; 2) universal service; and, 3) re-write of the 1996 Telecommunications Act.

Inter-carrier compensation is a term that defines how communications companies reimburse each other for the use of their respective networks. Since it does not make sense for every communications company in the nation to have their own line coming into your house, companies "rent" time on the lines of other companies in order to complete a phone call. Since these companies are "accessing" the network of another company in order to complete a specific call, they compensate each other with "access charges."

Access charges have become a substantial part of our cooperative's revenue in recent years. Now, a variety of factors are coming together to threaten the future of access charges in their current form. These factors include new age technologies such as Voice Over Internet Protocol, pressure from national carriers to drive down the cost of access, and a shift in regulatory philosophies.

The goal of some in the communications industry is to totally do away with access charges and put most of the cost of maintaining and upgrading our network on you, our local customers. Our message in Washington was that the United States thrived in the 20th Century because we had a well-funded and well-maintained highway infrastructure







that shared the costs among all Americans. Our belief is that the communications infrastructure is vitally important to the economic well-being of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and that maintenance and upgrades of the network should also be shared among all.

The theory behind Universal Service is actually pretty simple. What it says is that whether you live in the middle of a big city or in rural South Dakota, the cost of your local telephone service should be reasonable and affordable. However, the expense in getting that same local phone service to someone served by JVT is much higher for two reasons: 1) a lot more line must be laid to reach customers, and 2) there are fewer customers to share the cost.

In order to ease that overall burden, the federal government made a policy decision many years ago that said telephone customers in low-cost areas (urban areas) would help shoulder the cost burden of their neighbors living in high-cost areas (rural areas). This policy has allowed cooperatives like JVT to deliver state-of-the-art telephone service

at affordable rates. Without this policy, infrastructure investment in rural areas would have lagged behind our neighbors in the urban areas because the costs to deliver the service would have been significantly higher.

Some argue that the concept of universal service is outdated and could be repealed. We lobbied that putting the full cost of network maintenance and upgrades on the backs of rural consumers is both unfair and unworkable. Our arguments were well received in all the offices we visited.

As always, the directors and management of JVT will work closely with our state and national organizations to make sure that your interests are protected. We remain committed to delivering the best telecommunications products possible to you, our customers.

#### **CRACK THE IM CODE!**

Have you ever glanced over your child's shoulder while he or she was on an Instant Messenger (IM) service and found yourself puzzled by all the acronyms being used? Amid the alphabet soup are messages that parents would no doubt be interested in.

POS is a well-known red flag - it means "Parents Over Shoulder: Change Subject." There are literally hundreds (if not thousands) of these little characters out there in newsgroups, chat rooms, email messages, bulletin boards, etc. Even some personal websites are using them. These code words fall into the category of Acronyms, Smilies or Emoticons. They're not just a cute add-on or an expression of personality and they are in fact highly versatile and very functional. Learn the code so you can be more prepared to protect your child on the Internet. Here are just a few commonly used acronyms:

AFK Away from computer keyboard A/S/L-Age/Sex/Location BBL Be back later BBS Be back soon BC Because BCNU Be Seein You BFN Bye for now BMG Be my guest BRB Be right back CID Consider it done CUL or CUL8R See you later DOMOT-Don Equate me on this GMTA Great minds think alike GRA Go right ahead HTH Hope this helps IDK I don't know

IK I know

IMO in my opinion IMS Lam sorry JIC Just in case JK Just kidding JTLYK Jüst tö let you know K Okay KIS Keep it simple L8R Later LOL Laughing out loud NBD No bia deal NRN No response necessary OIC Oh I see OTOH On the other hand OTPOn the phone PLS or PLZ Please ROS Parents over shoulder RUOK? Are you okay?



SN Screen Name
SYS See you soon
TTFN Taka for now
TTYL Talk to you later
UN User Name:
WE Whatever
WFM Works for me
WTG Way to go
WU2 What's up?
YT? You there?

# Universal Service Charges May Boost US Phone Fees

Mon Mar 28, 2005 06:44 PM ET WASHINGTON, March 28 (Reuters)

U.S. households could see fees on their telephone bills rise at much as 18.1 percent by 2007 depending on what changes are made to the universal service fund which subsidizes communications services, congressional budget officials said on Monday.

Telephone carriers that offer long-distance service are required to pay a percentage of the revenues into the Universal Service Fund (USF), which subsidizes telephone for low-income families as well as Internet access in schools and libraries.

Typically those fees are passed on to consumers. But with the emergence of packages of minutes for wireless or unlimited calling plans, that has raised fresh questions about whether the fund would be sustainable.

Some possibilities for reforming the system include charging a flat fee for each telephone number or expanding the services that would fall under the program, said a report by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) for the Senate Budget Committee.

If no action is taken, a shrinking long-distance revenue base and increased demand on the USF program would cause the average payment by each household to rise 8.1 percent to \$2.26 a month in 2007 from \$2.09 per month in 2003, the CBO said.

The monthly average charge would likely rise to \$2.47 a month by 2007 or 18.1 percent if the USF program was switched to a per-number charge or if cable high-speed Internet service was included in the revenues for calculating contributions.

Alternatively, if based on usage of multiple communications services, the monthly fee would likely be \$2.28 by 2007, said the report.

Another option could be funding the USF programs through general Treasury revenues, CBO said.

"The economic cost of raising a dollar in general revenues, which may influence the supply of labor and capital, is generally less than the economic cost of raising a dollar from sector-specific taxes, which tend to distort consumers' choices by affecting the prices of goods and services," the report said.

# Welcome New Members

Atherton Joshua & Merrie Columbia 396-2488

Block Wanda Bristol 492-3179

Bristol Storage Company Bristol 492-3472

Bruckner Doug & Julie Groton 397-4443

Burger Dennis Mellette 887-3570

Charger Automotive & Service Center Doland 635-6116

Curt's Bodyworks Groton 397-2277

Franks Elizabeth Brentford 887-3117

Heikes Brian Groton 397-2380

Kelly Michelle Groton 397-2389

Krueger-Knoll Delores Groton 397-2681

Neal Dale Doland 635-6152

Olson Larry D & Sandi Groton 397-2353

Stern Jim Bristol 492-3474

Stucker Donald & Karlene Mellette 887-3552

Sumption Lois L Frederick 329-2440

Treeby Reece Hecla 994-2041

Wiseman Dustin Frederick 329-2044

## IMPORTANT DATES IN MAY

- 1 May Day
- 1 Teacher Appreciation Week
- 5 Cinqo de Mayo
- 8 Mother's Day
- 10 Disconnect Day
- 15 Wizard of Oz Day
- 15 Peace Day
- 26 JVT ANNUAL MEETING
- 30 Memorial Day JVT Office Closed
- 31 Bills Sent Out

# Service Technician Tip

Keep your family and guests safe - label all phones in your home with your 911 address.

# Directors

	我们就是2000年1月1日的	
Houghton - Columbia - Frederick	District 1	Roger Zastrow
Claremont - Hecla	District 2	Wendell Rye 🔙
City of Groton	District 3	Merle Hanson
Rural Groton - Andover	District 4	Bill Ewalt
Ferney - Mellette	District 5	-Duane Jark
Conde - Bristol	District 6	Mark Wattier
Turton - Doland	District 7	- William Troske
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## LOW INCOME ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE FOR PHONE SERVICE

JVT is authorized to provide two federal telephone assistance programs that were developed in response to concerns about the affordability of telephone service for low-income citizens.

The Lifeline program provides reduced monthly charges to telephone subscribers who qualify. The Link-Up program provides reduced connection charges to telephone subscribers who qualify.

#### WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Telephone service must be in the applicant's name. The applicant must participate in at least one of the following public assistance programs to be eligible:

- \* Medicaid
- \* Food Stamps
- \* Supplemental Security Income
- \* Federal Housing Assistance
- \* Low Income Home Energy Assistance
- \* Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
- \* National Free School Lunch Program
- \* Income Below 135% of Federal Poverty Guidelines

#### WHAT DO THE PROGRAMS PROVIDE?

Lifeline provides eligible subscribers with a credit of \$8.25 each month on the basic service portion of their telephone bill. The credit applies on the main home telephone line listed in the named eligible telephone company subscriber. Lifeline subscribers may also receive blocking of long distance calls on their telephone line at no charge.

Link-Up provides eligible subscribers with reduced connection charges for their basic home telephone service. This reduction is 50% of the applicable charges or \$30.00, whichever is less. Link-Up also provides for deferred payment of connection charges without interest. It does not cover the cost of wiring inside your home and is limited to one time per home address per subscriber.

Contact JVT by dialing 611 for more information.

# **Contact Information**

James Valley Telecommunications \* 235 E. 1st Avenue \* PO Box 260 \* Groton, SD 57445-0260 605-397-2323 or 1-800-556-6525 \* Fax: 605-397-2350

Email: jvinfo@jamesvalley.com Website: www.jamesvalley.com



Phone Directory

# TELEPHONE SAFETY

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The telephone is one of the safest appliances in the home or office. There are a few situations where a telephone user does need to be cautious.

### Use of the Telephone Near Water

The telephone should not be used in a bathtub, shower or pool. Immersion of the telephone or handset in water could cause an electrical shock.

Use of the Telephone During an Electrical Storm Avoid using a telephone during an electrical storm in the immediate area; calls of an urgent nature should be brief. Although the Telephone Company uses protective measures to limit abnormal electrical surges from entering the premise, absolute protection is impossible. There is a remote risk of a dangerous electrical shock from lightning when using the telephone during a nearby electrical storm.

Use of the Telephone to Report a Gas Leak

Do not use a telephone in the vicinity of a gas leak. The telephone contains electrical contacts that could generate a tiny spark when you lift the handset and dial. While unlikely, it may be possible for this spark to trigger an explosion if the gas concentration is high enough.

# SPECIAL NEEDS FOR CUSTOMERS WITH DISABILITIES

Telecommunications Equipment Distribution

Program

The Telecommunication Equipment Distribution Program (TEDP) is for people who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind, speech-impaired or have difficulty communicating on the telephone. Special equipment is available at no cost to enhance phone communication. For more information, call (605) 367-5759.

Telephone Assistance Programs

The Telephone Assistance Program (TAP) provides reduced phone bills for qualified low-income customers.

The Link-Up program provides financial help with telephone service installation charges for qualified low-income customers. Bill Print Message

#### LIFELINE & LINK-UP PROGRAMS

Lifeline provides eligible subscribers with a credit each month on the basic service portion of their telephone bill.

Link-Up provides eligible subscribers with reduced connection charges for their basic home telephone service.

For more information call JVT at 611.

#### NOTICE

#### TO ALL JAMES VALLEY TELECOMMUNICATIONS CUSTOMERS

Changes brought about by the federal Telecommunications Act of 1996 have resulted in low-income assistance programs in South Dakota. Low-income subscribers may qualify to receive reduced monthly and installation charges for basic telephone service. Details regarding the Lifeline and Link-Up programs are included in this notice.

FCC rules require a signed, written certification and periodic verification from the subscriber proving their eligibility by presenting in person or sending a copy of your Medicaid or other Lifeline qualifying public assistance card and self-certifying, under penalty of perjury, that you qualify to continue to participate in the Lifeline assistance program based on continued participation in qualifying public assistance programs or total household income below 135 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (documentation required).

If you, as a subscriber, qualify, you may complete the enclosed application form and return it to our office at:

James Valley Telecommunications 235 E First Ave PO Box 260 Groton, SD 57445-0260

It is required in signing and submitting the application that you certify under penalty of perjury that you, in fact, qualify for Lifeline and Link-Up benefits, and if, at any time, you become ineligible, you will notify James Valley Telecommunications.

UNDER THE LIFELINE PROGRAM, ELIGIBLE CUSTOMERS RECEIVE AN \$8.25 REDUCTION TO THEIR BASIC MONTHLY TELEPHONE SERVICE.

Please read the enclosed materials carefully. If you have any questions regarding these programs, call 611 or 1-800-556-6525.

#### LOW-INCOME ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

James Valley Telecommunications is authorized to provide two federal telephone assistance programs that were developed in response to concerns about the affordability of telephone service for low-income citizens.

- The Lifeline program provides reduced monthly charges to telephone subscribers who qualify.
- The Link-Up program provides reduced connection charges to telephone subscribers who qualify.

#### WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Telephone service must be in the applicant's name. The applicant must participate in at least one of the following public assistance programs to be eligible:

- Medicaid (e.g. Title XIX/Medical, State Supplemental Assistance)
- Food Stamps program
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal Housing Assistance (Section 8)
- Low Income Home Energy Assistance
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program
- National School Lunch (NSL) free lunch program

Or

 My household income is at or below 135 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (documentation required)

#### WHAT DO THE PROGRAMS PROVIDE?

Lifeline provides eligible subscribers with a credit of \$8.25 each month on the basic service portion of their telephone bill. The credit applies on the main home telephone line listed in the named eligible telephone company subscriber. Lifeline subscribers may also receive blocking of long distance calls on their telephone line at no charge.

Link-Up provides eligible subscribers with reduced connection charges for their basic home telephone service. This reduction is 50 percent of the applicable charges or \$30.00, whichever is less. Link-Up also provides for deferred payment of connection charges without interest. It does not cover the cost of wiring inside your home and is limited to one time per home address per subscriber.

#### HOW DO I APPLY AND RECERTIFY?

If you meet the eligibility requirements, fill out and sign the application form with appropriate documentation provided and deliver or mail it to: James Valley Telecommunications at 235 E 1<sup>st</sup> Ave, Groton, SD 57445-0260.

#### COULD I BECOME INELIGIBLE?

When you no longer participate in any of the qualifying public assistance programs and your household income exceeds 135 per cent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, you are no longer eligible for Lifeline or Link-Up. Your are obligated by law to notify James Valley Telecommunications and advise the company that you are no longer eligible for Lifeline.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you have guestions about Lifeline or Link-Up, the application form or your telephone service, contact James Valley Telecommunications at 611 or 1-800-556-6525.



# Lifeline and Link-Up Assistance (Please Print)

Name					
(l Address:	Last)		(First	)	(Middle)
(5	Street)	(City)	(State	)	(Zip)
		existing service): (			
Number wh	nere you can	be reached or rece	eive message:	s: <u>( )</u>	-
Please ans	wer the follo	wing questions (ch	eck appropria	area code & 7-c te lines):	ligit number
1. I am ap	plying for:	Lifeline m	onthly telepho elephone conr	ne service dis rection charge	count discount
Note	e: Telephon	e Service MUST be	in applicant's	name.	
2. I am cu	rrently partic	cipating in the follow	/ing program(s	s): Check all th	nat apply
OR	Food Star Suppleme Federal P Low-Incor Temporar National S	(e.g. Title XIX/Medic nps program ental Security Incom ublic Housing Assis me Home Energy As y Assistance for Ne School Lunch (NSL) hold income is at or s (documentation re	ne (SSI) stance (Section ssistance edy Families free lunch pro	n 8) (TANF) progra ogram	m
l agree to on the abo	notify Jame	es Valley Telecom	munications,	when I no lor	nger qualify based
have read qualificati	the inform	ive Lifeline and/or	cation and ui	nderstand I m	ust meet the above
Your Sign	nature		 Social Secur	ity Number D	Date



# SELF-CERTIFICATION FOR LIFELINE/LINK UP APPLICANTS QUALIFYING UNDER INCOME-BASED CRITERION

l,	, certify under penalty of perjury that I qualify			
for Lifeline/Link Up assistance based on my household income that is at or below 135				
percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.	I further certify under penalty of perjury that			
there are members in my	household and that the supporting income			
documentation presented to my telecommunications provider accurately represents the				
annual income of all members of my household.				
Signature:				
Date:				

# 2004 Estimated Income Requirements for a Household at or Below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines

Size of Family Unit	48 Contiguous States & DC
1	\$12,569
2	\$16,862
3	\$21,155
4	\$25,448
5	\$29,741
6	\$34,034
7	\$38,327
8	\$42,620
For each additional person, add	\$ 4,293



## Lifeline and Link-Up Certification and Recertification Procedures

April 7, 2005 - Letter with recertification forms and return envelopes sent to existing customers receiving the monthly credit for Lifeline program giving 60 days to return completed form and documentation with notification that any customer not returning completed forms with documentation will be removed from Lifeline program.

June 10, 2005 – Due date for certifications with appropriate documentation must be received back at the office. Any individual not returning certification documents will be removed from the program effective July 1, 2005.

Annually thereafter, a separate mailing of letters with recertification forms and return envelopes will be sent to a random sample of customers participating in the Lifeline program based on a factor of 90% accuracy with +/-10% margin of error to verify eligibility.

Customers certifying or recertifying for Lifeline and/or Link-Up programs will be required to provide corroborating documentation for eligibility. An indicator will be placed on each customer's account when certification is completed for reference purposes. Scanned documentation will be retained indexed for qualified individuals.

New customers may certify for Lifeline and/or Link-Up programs any time throughout the year by completing the certification forms, signing and providing corroborating documentation.

Throughout the year, existing customers must notify James Valley Telecommunications when no longer eligible and to be removed from the respective program(s).

TELEVE

# BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

SOUTH DAKOTA PURLA-UTILITIES COMMINS

IN THE MATTER OF THE REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION OF FCC REQUIREMENTS FOR LIFELINE AND LINK-UP PROGRAMS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF ADDITIONAL OUTREACH EFFORTS

Docket No. TC05-058

#### CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

James M. Cremer, of Bantz, Gosch & Cremer, L.L.C., hereby certifies that on the 18<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2005, he mailed by United States mail, first class postage thereon prepaid, an original and ten true and correct copies of the JAMES VALLEY COOPERATIVE

TELEPHONE COMPANY LIFELINE AND LINK-UP SUBMISSIONS in the above-captioned action to the following:

Ms. Pamela Bonrud Executive Director S.D. Public Utilities Commission 500 E. Capitol Ave. Pierre, SD 57501

Dated this 18<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2005.

BANTZ, GOSCH & CREMER, L.L.C.

Jameş'M. Cremer

Attorney for James Valley Cooperative

Telephone Company

P. O. Box 970

Aberdeen, South Dakota 57402-0970

Telephone (605) 225-2232