

**SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
LIFELINE/LINK UP ADVERTISING/OUTREACH
ANNUAL REPORT
JUNE 1, 2009**

Company: Roberts County Telephone Coop. Assn.

Address: 205 Main St

New Effington, SD 57255

Telephone number: 605/637-5211

Company contact: Pamela Harrington – CEO
Wanda Heesch – Billing/Cust Care manager

Study Area Code: 391974

Lifeline/Link Up Advertising/Outreach Activities:

xxx Advertise in media of general distribution.* (See attached advertisement(s).)

xxx Letter to existing and new customers regarding the availability of Lifeline/Link Up.* (See attached letter.)

xxx Company's Lifeline/Link Up information in directory.

xxx Company's Lifeline/Link Up information available on Company website.
(www.tnics.com)

 Company's information posted on USAC website.

 Other (describe): _____

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Address: 205 Main St.

New Effington, SD 57255

Telephone number: 605/637-5211

Company contact: Pamela Harrington – CEO
Wanda Heesch – Billing/Cust Care manager

Study Area Code: 391674

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the bidders that will be invited to raise... out some outlets. It was decided by con-
the session at 8:45 P.M. to discuss

Low Income Assistance Available to Telephone Subscribers

Roberts County Telephone Cooperative Association (RCTCA), RC Communications, Inc. (RCC), and RC Services are authorized to provide federal telephone assistance programs. Two such programs provided by both companies are "Lifeline" and "Link-Up." Both were developed in response to concerns about the affordability of telephone service for low income citizens.

The Lifeline program provides a \$8.25 monthly credit on the basic service portion of the participant's telephone bill. The credit applies on the main home telephone line listed in the name of the eligible telephone company subscriber. Lifeline subscribers may also receive blocking 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 or 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.

Applicants are eligible if they participate in at least one of the following public assistance programs: Medicaid (e.g. Title XIX/Medical, State Supplemental Assistance), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), National School Lunch (NSL) Free Lunch Program, Food Stamps, Federal Public Housing Assistance, Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF), Low-Income Home Energy Assistance, or income is at or below (135%) of Federal Poverty Guidelines (must provide documentation).

Additional Lifeline and Link-Up support is available to those qualifying individuals living on Tribal Lands. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) can verify whether or not a specific location meets the Enhanced Lifeline/Link-Up definition. Enhanced Lifeline/Link-Up provides for expanded eligibility opportunities and additional telephone service discounts. In addition to the previously cited programs, for those individuals residing on Tribal Lands, participation in any of the following meets the eligibility standard: Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) general assistance; Tribally administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); or Head Start Programs (under income qualifying eligibility provision only). If you are on Lifeline or Link-Up and are no longer eligible for any of these low-income programs, you are obligated by law to notify RCTCA or RCC of your ineligibility.

Contact the RCTCA/RCC office in New Effington, 605-637-5211 or 888-

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

2009 Estimated Income Requirements for a Household at or Below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines

Persons In Family or Household	48 Contiguous States and D.C.	Alaska	Hawaii
1	\$10,830	\$13,530	\$12,460
2	\$14,570	\$18,210	\$16,760
3	\$18,310	\$22,890	\$21,060
4	\$22,050	\$27,570	\$25,360
5	\$25,790	\$32,250	\$29,660
6	\$29,530	\$36,930	\$33,960
7	\$33,270	\$41,610	\$38,260
8	\$37,010	\$46,290	\$42,560
For Each Additional Person, add	\$3,740	\$4,680	\$4,300

Residents of Indian reservations or tribal lands qualify if they participate in any of the programs listed on the front page, 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 eligibility)
- Tribal TANF

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

To apply for Lifeline, Link Up, and TLS discounts please contact Roberts County Telephone Cooperative Association or RC Communications in New Effington, 605-637-5211 or 888-668-0877, for more information or application forms. You may also e-mail questions to customer@rcotel.net.



RC FAMILY OF COMPANIES

205 MAIN ST • PO BOX 197 • NEW EFFINGTON, SD 57255-0197
605-637-5211 • 800-256-6854 • FAX: 605-637-5302

Lifeline, Link Up, and Toll Limitation Service support provide discounts to eligible low-income consumers to help them establish and maintain telephone service. Note: Telecommunications carriers cannot charge a Lifeline customer federal USF fees on the local service portion of their telephone bill.

What type of discount is available?

Lifeline assistance lowers the cost of basic, monthly local telephone service. Eligible consumers can receive up to \$8.25 per month in discounts.

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 Program's free lunch program

(Continued on back of page)

www.tnics.com



Subscribers Receive 2009 Phone Book

Directories mailed to telephone customers in March
 The RC Family of Companies 2009 Telephone Directory is scheduled to be mailed to telephone subscribers the beginning of March. If you do not receive a copy of the directory, please call the RC office at 611.

Many things may affect your listing, such as moving, billing changes, disconnections at the time of publishing, and the transfer of information from RC to the printing company. While every effort is made to insure accuracy in the compiling and printing of the directory to prevent errors and omissions, they may still occur despite all precautions. Please contact RC immediately if there are any corrections needing to be made for next year's directory. Corrections will be noted in the newsletter as soon as possible.

Additional copies may be picked up at the following locations:
 Claiborne City: Claiborne Community Grocery
 Hillsdale: Hillbank Communications, Inc.
 Peebles: Post Office
 Wehlen: First Savings Bank
 Wilmet: RC Office or Wilmet State Bank



Corona: Corona Learning Center
 New Effingham: RC Office
 Summit: People's State Bank
 Watertown: RC Office



Yes, You Can Afford Telephone Service

LifeLine and Link-Up programs available for low income citizens

Watauga County Telephone Cooperative Association (RCTCA) and RC Communications, Inc. (RCCI) are authorized to provide federal telephone assistance programs. These such programs provided by both companies are "LifeLine" and "Link-Up". Both were developed in response to concerns about the affordability of telephone service for low income citizens.

The LifeLine program provides a \$8.25 monthly credit on the basic service portion of the participant's telephone bill. The credit applies to the main home telephone line listed in the name of the eligible telephone company subscriber. LifeLine subscribers may also receive a long distance call 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 charge or \$30 or whichever is less. Link-Up also provides for deferred payment of connection charges with no interest. It does not cover the cost of wiring inside your home and is limited to one time per home address per subscriber.

Applicants are eligible if they participate in at least one of the following public assistance programs: Medicaid (e.g. Title XIX/Medicaid, State Supplemental Assistance), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), National School Lunch (NSL), Free Lunch Program, Food Stamps, Federal Public

Housing Assistance, Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF), Low-Income Home Energy Assistance, or income is at or below 135% of Federal Poverty Guidelines (must provide documentation).

Additional LifeLine and Link-Up support is available to those qualifying individuals living on Tribal Lands. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) can verify whether or not a specific location meets the Enhanced LifeLine/Link-Up definition. Link-Up provides for expanded eligibility opportunities and additional telephone service discounts. In addition to the previously cited programs, for those individuals residing on Tribal Lands, participation in any of the following meets the eligibility standard: Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) general assistance; Tribally administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); or Head Start Program funds. Income qualifying eligibility provision only. If you are on LifeLine or Link-Up and are no longer eligible for any of these low-income programs, you are obligated by law to notify RCTCA or RCCI of your ineligibility.

Contact the RCTCA/RCCI office in New Effingham, at 611-2711 or 611-266-0577, for more information or application forms. You may also e-mail questions to customers@rc.net.

Our Way of Saying...
THANKS
 Sign up for one of RC's Automatic Pay Plans AND receive a \$10 credit on your next bill. RC offers Automatic Bank Collect and Credit Card payment options.

VISA DISCOVER
 Call today for more information
 New Effingham
 617-6711 or 800-254-4454
 Telephone
 611-2322 or 611-99-2414

THE BENEFITS REALLY ADD UP
 Residential & Business Bundles Are Available
 Telephone • High Speed Internet • Digital Cable TV

GENERAL RULES, REGULATIONS, & INFORMATION

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Subject to the new subscribers provisions below, billing for services will be on the 1st day of each month. Payment will be due by the 15th day of the current month. If payment is not received by the 4th day of the following month, a \$10.00 late penalty fee will be added to the past due account. If payment is not received by the 10th day of that month, (1) services will be disconnected for nonpayment and will not be reconnected until the amount then due, including all collection fees, plus the then applicable reconnect charge, has been paid in full; and (2) RC Family of Companies may charge an additional deposit fee in its discretion.

If a customer pays a portion of their bill sufficient to cover all local service charges, but not long distance charges, the company may, at its discretion, or at the customer's request, put a toll restriction on the customer's line until all long distance charges and any additional local service charges are paid in full. Toll service will be restored once, and only if, all past due amounts are received.

RC offers many convenient ways to pay your monthly bill. Have your payments automatically deducted from your bank account, pay by credit card, or register on-line at www.inics.com for electronic billing. Choose from either monthly or recurring payment options. When mailing payments to the RC office, be sure to enclose the payment stub along with your payment.

NEW OR RECONNECTED SUBSCRIBER PROMPT PAYMENT POLICY

RC Family of Companies reviews the service payment history for all subscribers. Such payment history serves as the basis for establishing a credit rating for each subscriber. New subscribers who do not have a credit rating, or who have a credit rating which does not meet minimal standards established from time to time by RC Family of Companies, must make their payments within 10 days after billing for the first 6 months of service. Subscribers who have been disconnected for non-payment must make their payments within 10 days for the first 6 months after reconnection. Assuming payments are made in a timely fashion during the first 6 months of service, such subscribers are subject to the Payment of Bills procedure described above and payments must then be made in accordance with that schedule.

RC Family of Companies may in its discretion disconnect service for new subscribers or subscribers who have been reconnected after being disconnected for non-payment, who do not observe this required Prompt Payment Policy.

NEW OR RECONNECTED SUBSCRIBER DEPOSIT POLICY

A \$100.00 deposit will be required at the time of application for each new subscriber with no credit rating or a credit rating which does not meet the mini-

mum standards established from time-to-time by RC Family of Companies or subscribers who have been reconnected after disconnection for non-payment. The deposit will be returned after one year if payments are successfully made complying with the Subscriber Prompt Payment Policy and Payment of Bills Policy for 12 consecutive months. The deposit will be retained by RC Family of Companies if the subscriber fails to comply with these policies.

CAN'T AFFORD TELEPHONE SERVICE? LINK-UP AND LIFELINE PROGRAMS CAN HELP HOME TELEPHONE ASSISTANCE

Link-Up and Lifeline help eligible people pay PART of their telephone costs.

LINK-UP

- Will save you 50% of the initial charges to hook up primary telephone service, or \$30, whichever is less.
- You may qualify for service without a deposit. Ask your local telephone company.

LIFELINE

- Can save you at least \$8.25 on your monthly phone bill for primary local telephone service.
- Applies only to primary local telephone service in the home where you live.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Anyone qualified under one of the following Public Assistance Programs:

- Federal Housing Assistance
- Food Stamps
- Income at or below 135% of Federal Poverty Guidelines
- Low Income Home Energy Assistance
- Medicaid
- National School Lunch Free Lunch Program
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Temporary Aid to Needy Families

HOW TO OBTAIN THE TELEPHONE SERVICES

- When you qualify for one of the above programs through your county Social Services Office, you will need to contact RC Family of Companies for an application.

WHAT IF MY BENEFITS STOP?

If you no longer qualify for any Public Assistance Program, you no longer qualify for Link-Up or Lifeline and agree to notify RC Family of Companies that you are no longer eligible for Lifeline and Link-Up.

MORE INFORMATION

- For more information on Link-Up and Lifeline, call Roberts County Telephone Cooperative Association, RC Communications, or RC Services.
- For questions on eligibility, call your county social services office.

NOTE:

People who live on tribal lands may be eligible for a separate Tribal Link-Up and Lifeline Programs. Contact Roberts County Telephone Cooperative Association, RC Communications, or RC Services for information.

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