

**SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
LIFELINE/LINK UP ADVERTISING/OUTREACH
ANNUAL REPORT
JULY 1, 2013**

Company: Red River Rural Telephone Association
Address: 510 Broadway – PO Box 136
Abercrombie, ND 58001

Telephone number: 701-553-8309

Company contact: Jack Plecity

Study Area Code: 381631

Lifeline/Link Up Advertising/Outreach Activities

- Advertise in media of general distribution.* (See attached ad from Richland County News-Monitor published Dec. 2012)
- Letter to existing and new customers regarding the availability of Lifeline/Link Up.* (See attached bill insert distributed Feb. 2013)
- Company's Lifeline/Link Up information in directory (See attached article from the directory distributed Jan. 2013)
- Company's Lifeline/Link Up information available on Company website. (See www.rrt.net under "Telephone, Telephone Assistance Programs")
- Company's information posted on USAC website
- Other (describe): Lifeline posters at telephone office, social service departments and local food pantry _____

* Required

Telephone Lifeline Assistance Available

Under the Telecommunications Act of 1996, "universal service" means basic telephone service is available to all consumers. Universal service is voice grade access to the telecommunications network, including local usage, touchtone calling, single-party service, access to emergency 911 services, access to operator service, access to qualifying low-income consumers. All of these services are available from Red River Communications in these areas: Abercrombie, Colfax, Fairmount, Great Bend, Hankinson, Lidgerwood, Mooreton and Wyndmere, ND; Barnesville rural, Kent and Rollag, MN.

2012 charges for these universal services are:

Basic local residential service \$14.95-\$18.00/month
(Rates vary by exchange and EAS charges may apply)

Touchtone calling	No charge
Single-party service	No charge
Access to 911 service (Local government assesses a tax to pay for special equipment.)	No charge
Access to operator services	No charge
Access to directory assistance (If you call a long distance company for assistance, that company may charge for its services.)	\$.60 per call for local info
Access to long distance telephone companies (Flat rate prescribed by federal agency)	\$6.50/month
Low-income discounts	\$9.25/month
Toll-blocking	No charge

Lifeline is a low-income discount available to qualifying persons participating in certain assistance programs or based on income compared to the poverty level. State rules vary. For more information on Lifeline, call Red River Communications at 701-553-8309, 1-866-553-8309 or visit www.rrt.net.

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Statement of Non-Discrimination

Red River Rural Telephone Association dba Red River Communications is the recipient of Federal financial assistance from the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The USDA prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0703, or call (800) 787-8821 (voice) and select Option 2, or (202) 692-0107 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Recycle Your Old Telephone Books

Help conserve natural resources by recycling your old phone books. These can be dropped off at the business office in Abercrombie, ND or at the following recycling centers:



**Barnesville, MN — Tuesday & Thursday
12-9 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m. to noon.**

**Hawley, MN — Monday & Thursday 4-8
p.m. and Saturday 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

Account Privacy Rules In Effect

Red River Communications has always considered customer account information private. FCC rules now dictate how that information is protected. You need:

- ◆ **Authorized contacts** – Be sure anyone you authorize to access your account, including your spouse, is listed as an authorized contact.
- ◆ **Password** – If you aren't calling from the account telephone number, a password will be requested before information is shared.
- ◆ **Security questions** – These questions will be asked if the correct password isn't supplied.
- ◆ **Identification** – A photo ID may be required when accessing the account in person.



Please do not be offended if these steps are taken to verify your identity.

Contact the business office if you have any questions about the privacy of your account.

L I F E L I N E Telephone Assistance Programs for Low-Income Consumers

Red River Communications offers residential telephone assistance programs, referred to as Lifeline, to help eligible persons establish and maintain telephone service. Only ONE Lifeline discount per customer or household allowed.



Lifeline applies only to primary local telephone service in your home. It lowers the monthly cost of telephone service by at least \$8.25. Eligible persons receive a form of assistance listed below or self-certify based on income.

Certification for LIFELINE - MN Residents -

I certify under penalty of perjury that I currently receive benefits from the following program and agree to notify Red River Communications immediately if I cease to participate in the program:

- Medicaid Food Stamps Supplemental Security Income National Free School Lunch
- MN Family Investment Program Federal Public Housing Assistance
- Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
- Low Income - at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (Proof of income is required - contact Red River Communications for list of accepted documents or visit www.lifelinesupport.org)

Customer Name _____
(Must be same name as on telephone bill)

Signature _____
(Must be same name as on telephone bill)

Date _____

Social Security # _____

Phone _____

- ND Residents -

If you participate in an assistance program you should contact social services for the necessary Lifeline form.

The form to the left can be used to self-certify your participation in Lifeline based on income only.

Return completed forms to Red River Communications.

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COVER PHOTO:

The cover photo was submitted by Gregg Schildberger, Hankinson exchange.

The picture of the fireworks was taken at Lake Elsie Hankinson, ND.

Telephone Assistance Programs

Lifeline and Link-up are federal and state assistance programs which reduce telephone bills for qualified low-income customers. Lifeline offers a monthly credit up to \$10/month and the Link-up program reduces installation charges for qualified low-income customers. You may qualify for telephone assistance if you participate in one of the following assistance programs:

Supplemental Security Income	Medicaid
Low-Income Home Energy Assistance	Food Stamps
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families	National Free School Lunch

or you may qualify if your household income is below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

Methods for qualifying and applying vary by state. For more information, call Red River Communications or your county social services office or visit www.lifelinesupport.org.

Account Privacy Information (CPNI)

Red River Communications has always considered customer account information private. FCC rules now dictate how that information is protected. You need:

- * **Authorized contacts** - Be sure anyone you authorize to access your account, including your spouse, is listed as an additional contact.
- * **Password** - If you aren't calling from the account telephone number, a password will be requested before information is shared.
- * **Security questions** - These questions will be asked if the correct password isn't supplied.
- * **Identification** - A photo ID may be required when accessing the account in person.

Contact the business office if you have any questions about the privacy of your account.



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 RRT  Web

[Home](#) > [TELEPHONE](#) > Telephone Assistance Programs

Quick Links

About Us
Community Info
Newsletter
Forms
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Newspaper Links
Useful Links

Hard-of-Hearing: [more information](#)

Vision Impaired:

In Minnesota, visit www.dbproject.mn.org

In North Dakota, visit www.familyconnect.org

Financial Assistance: [more information](#)

Having trouble using the telephone? Help is available.



Lifeline:

Affordable Telephone Service for Income-Eligible Consumers

If you think you can't afford telephone service, help is available. A federal program called Lifeline can help income-eligible consumers by providing discounts on basic monthly telephone service at their primary residence.

What Benefits are Available Under the Lifeline Programs?

Lifeline Assistance provides discounts on basic monthly service at the primary residence for qualified telephone subscribers. These discounts can be \$9.25 per month, depending on your state.

How To Qualify for Lifeline Discounts

Eligibility criteria for Lifeline programs vary by state. Eligible subscribers participate in one of the following assistance programs or qualify based on income:

- Medicaid
- Food Stamps
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8)
- Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)
- National School Lunch Program's Free Lunch Program
- Minnesota Family Investment Program
- Low-income at or below 135% of the federal Poverty Guidelines (See <http://aspe.hhs.gov/POVERTY/09poverty.shtml>)

In Minnesota or South Dakota, you may apply for Lifeline or Linkup [using this form](#). Eligibility is verified annually.

In North Dakota, contact your county social services office for the Lifeline/Linkup authorization form. You can also contact Red River Telephone or your state public service commission for more information about these programs and to determine whether or not you qualify for discounts.

To find the specific eligibility requirements for your state, visit the USAC Web site at www.lifelinesupport.org or contact Red River Telephone.