

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

Company: Western Telephone Company  
Address: P.O. Box 157  
218 Commercial Ave.  
Highmore, SD 57345  
Telephone number: 605-852-2224  
Company contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
Study Area Code: \_\_\_\_\_

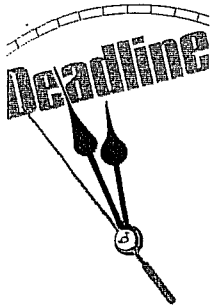
Lifeline/Tribal Link Up Advertising/Outreach Activities:

- Advertise in media of general distribution.\* (See attached advertisement(s).)
- Letter to existing and new customers regarding the availability of Lifeline/ Tribal Link Up.\* (See attached letter.)
- Company's Lifeline/Tribal Link Up information in directory.
- Company's Lifeline/Tribal Link Up information available on Company website.  
(www.companywebsiteaddress.com) www.venturecomm.net
- Company's information posted on USAC website.
- Other (describe): Put on Venture's local television channel.

\*Required

# White Page Directory Listing Deadline

Anyone wishing to make changes to their white page listing for the 2011-2012 Phone Book must contact the service department prior to July 25, 2012. If any changes are made after this deadline, the corrections will not show up in this year's directory. For questions and changes please call 1-800-824-7282.



## Lifeline & Link-up Program gets a Facelift

The FCC recently issued a new ruling that will significantly change the Lifeline and Link-Up Program over the next few months. The non-tribal lifeline customers' monthly support will increase from \$8.25 to \$9.25 each month. Link-up support for non-tribal lifeline customers will no longer be funded as of April 1, 2012. Tribal link-up support will now cover 100% of customary charges for installing telecommunications service, up to \$100 for eligible residents of Tribal lands.

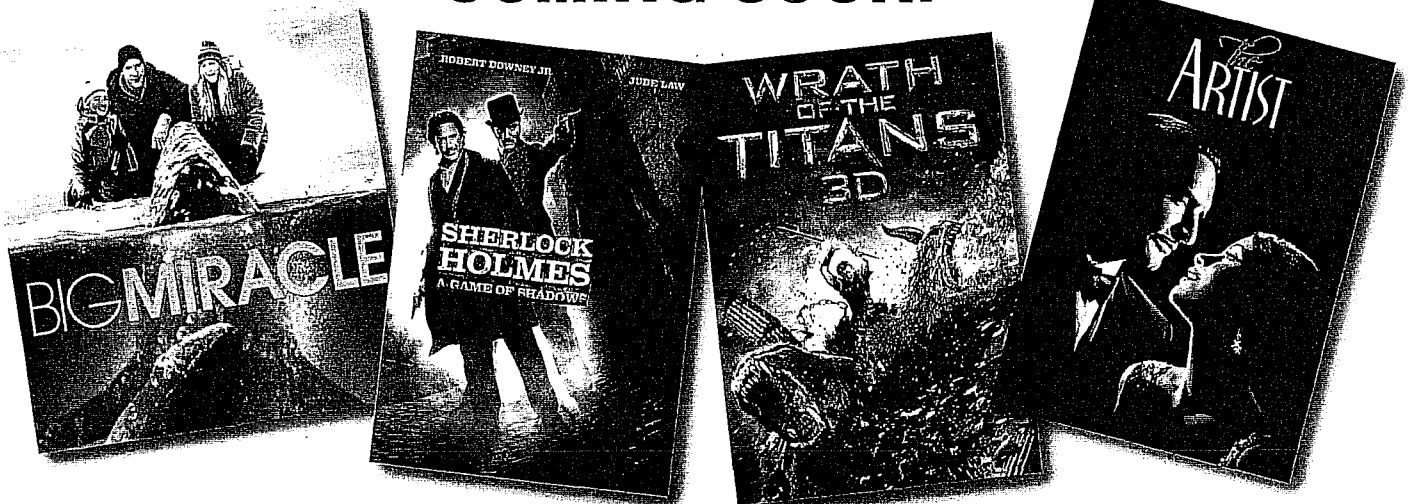
A database is being created to insure that customers are only receiving one Lifeline discount per phone line per household. Participation in the program will need to be certified yearly for ALL enrolled customers. Participants will lose the discount and will be subject to penalties if they fail to follow the re-certification process.

Only one discount is allowed per household and violators will be de-enrolled and potentially could be prosecuted by the US Government. Lifeline participants must notify the telecommunications provider within 30 days of any address changes or if they no longer qualify for the Lifeline monthly discount.

Applicants will be required to provide their date of birth and the last four digits of their social security number on their application. Anyone residing in the home using the same 911 physical address, will qualify the customer for the Lifeline monthly discount.

As Venture Communications is made aware of further changes, we will make adjustments to stay current with the FCC requirements.

# NEW PPV RELEASES COMING SOON!



[www.venturecomm.net](http://www.venturecomm.net)

**venture**  
communications  
cooperative

# CUSTOMER SERVICE

**TO APPLY FOR NEW SERVICE  
OR CHANGE YOUR SERVICE**  
Venture Communications Cooperative  
1-605-852-2224 or Toll Free 1-800-824-7282

## Trouble Shooting Tips:

Trouble with your telephone may come from any of three sources:

1. The telephone set
2. Wiring inside your home or business
3. The telephone line

### To check:

Test your modular phone by unplugging the one with the problem and try another phone. If this corrects the problem, it is probably a problem with your telephone itself. Have the phone repaired or replaced.

If you have determined that the telephone is not the problem, check the phone at the phone jack nearest to where your phone line comes into your home or business. If the phone works here but not in another place in your house, the problem is most likely in the inside wiring. If the inside wiring appears to be the problem or you cannot identify what is causing the problem, contact the telephone office at 611 or 1-800-824-7282.

## To Report Trouble:

When reporting trouble to our service desk or off-hours answering service, please provide the following information:

1. Your full name and street address.
2. Your telephone number.
3. What the trouble is and if you are having trouble with all of your telephones or just one.
4. If possible, a telephone number where you can be reached.

## Customer Assurance Plan

Nobody likes to worry about what might happen. That's why we have developed our *Customer Assurance Plan* to protect you in case of the unexpected. If you have trouble with the telephone wiring or installed jacks inside your home or business, our technicians will repair the problem at no cost to you. Without this protection, a problem in the wiring within your house will cost you time and materials, which can quickly run into a large sum of money. Don't wait!! Call our office today at 611 or 1-800-824-7282 to have our *Customer Assurance Plan* placed on your line.

## LIFELINE AND ENHANCED LIFELINE DISCOUNTS

Venture Communications offers a program to its low-income subscribers that results in a rate reduction on monthly services. Subscribers who participate in any of the following programs also qualify for participation in our Lifeline program:

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

In addition, a subscriber may qualify for this program if their household income is at or below 135 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

Participation in any of the above programs as well as some tribal assistance programs will qualify a subscriber living on tribal lands for the Enhanced Lifeline program.

For additional information and applications forms, please contact our office at 800-824-7282.

Phonebook

# Need help paying your phone bill?

Many low-income families qualify for assistance with phone charges, but don't realize that this help is available. You are allowed only one Lifeline discount per household. You cannot transfer your Lifeline discount to someone else, even if he or she is eligible.

Lifeline is a federally funded program created to provide every customer the opportunity to have affordable telephone service. Lifeline provides qualified customers with a monthly discount if you are enrolled in one of the following:

- Food Stamps
- Federal Public Housing Assistance
- Low Income Home Energy Assistance
- Supplemental Security Income
- National School Lunch free lunch program
- Medicaid
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program

Individuals who live on a federally recognized reservation or trust land may qualify for a discount if they receive assistance from one of the following:

- Food Stamps
- Federal Public Housing Assistance
- Low Income Home Energy Assistance
- Supplemental Security Income
- National School Lunch free lunch program
- Medicaid
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program
- Bureau of Indian Affairs general assistance program
- Tribally or State Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
- Head Start ( meeting income qualifying standards)

If you do not participate in one or more of the programs listed above, you may qualify for Lifeline if your household income does not exceed 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (see table below).

Number in Residence	135% Guideline (Annual)
1	\$15,080
2	\$20,426
3	\$25,772
4	\$31,118
5	\$36,464
6	\$41,810
7	\$47,156
8	\$52,502
<i>For each additional person after 8, add \$5,346 to the annual guideline.</i>	



**Call Venture Communications  
at 1.800.824.7282 and  
visit with a local, reliable  
person to get signed up today.**

Cornerstone Group © 2012

## Lifeline

**Tribal Lifeline and Toll Blocking** support is available from Venture Communications. These programs provide discounts to eligible low-income consumers to help them establish and maintain telephone service.

**Lifeline** assistance lowers the cost of basic, monthly local telephone service. Eligible consumers can receive \$9.25 per month in discounts. In addition, the Federal Universal Service Charge is not assessed to consumers participating in Lifeline.

**Toll Blocking** prevents the placement of all long distance calls for which a subscriber would be charged. Toll Blocking is available to eligible consumers at no cost.

Customers are eligible if they, one of their dependents or their household participate in one of the following programs:

- Low-Income Home Energy assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), f/k/a Food Stamps
- Medicaid
- National School Lunch Program's Free Lunch Program
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

In addition, consumers are eligible if their household income is at or below 135% of the federal poverty guidelines.

Venture Communications voice service is a Lifeline-supported service. Only eligible consumers may enroll in the Lifeline program. Lifeline applicants must present documentation demonstrating eligibility either through participation in one of the qualifying federal assistance programs or through income-based means. Lifeline recipients are required to recertify their eligibility every year. The Lifeline program is limited to one benefit per household, consisting of either wireline or wireless service. A household is defined for purposes of the Lifeline program, as an individual or group of individuals who live together at the same address and share income and expenses. Lifeline is a government benefit program, and consumers who willfully make false statements in order to obtain the benefit can be punished by fine or imprisonment or can be barred from the program.

To apply for this low-income assistance, please contact Venture Communications at 1-800-824-7282, 605-852-2224 or by going to our website at [venture@venturecomm.net](mailto:venture@venturecomm.net).

## **Tribal Lifeline and Link Up**

### **Customers on Indian Reservations or Tribal Lands**

**Tribal Lifeline, Tribal Link Up** and **Toll Blocking** support is available from Venture Communications. These programs provide discounts to eligible low-income consumers to help them establish and maintain telephone service.

**Tribal Lifeline** assistance lowers the cost of basic, monthly local telephone service.

**Tribal Link Up** reduces the cost of initiating new telephone service.

**Toll Blocking** prevents the placement of all long distance calls for which a subscriber would be charged. Toll Blocking is available to eligible consumers at no cost.

Customers are eligible if they, one of their dependents or their household participate in one of the following programs:

- Low-Income Home Energy assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), f/k/a Food Stamps
- Medicaid
- National School Lunch Program's Free Lunch Program
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Tribally Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TTANF)
- Head Start (income eligible)
- Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations

In addition, consumers are eligible if their household income is at or below 135% of the federal poverty guidelines.

Venture Communications voice service is a Lifeline-supported service. Only eligible consumers may enroll in the Lifeline program. Lifeline applicants must present documentation demonstrating eligibility either through participation in one of the qualifying federal assistance programs or through income-based means. Lifeline recipients are required to recertify their eligibility every year. The Lifeline program is limited to one benefit per household, consisting of either wireline or wireless service. A household is defined for purposes of the Lifeline program, as an individual or group of individuals who live together at the same address and share income and expenses. Lifeline is a government benefit program, and consumers who willfully make false statements in order to obtain the benefit can be punished by fine or imprisonment or can be barred from the program.

To apply for this low-income assistance, please contact Venture Communications at 1-800-824-7282, 605-852-2224 or by going to our website at [venture@venturecomm.net](mailto:venture@venturecomm.net).