

**SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
LIFELINE/TRIBAL LINK UP ADVERTISING/OUTREACH
ANNUAL REPORT
JULY 1, 2015**

Company: West River Cooperative Telephone Company

Address: 801 Coleman Ave.

Po Box 39

Bison, SD 57620

Telephone number: 605-244-5213

Company contact: Colgan Huber

Study Area Code: 391689

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/Link Up.* (See attached letter.)

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

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

- Company's information posted on USAC website.

- Other (describe): Please see attached items _____

*Required

Lifeline Assistance Application and Certification Form

(Please Print or Type)

Company Name: West River Cooperative Telephone Company

SPIN: 143002255

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ Middle Initial: _____

Residential Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____
(Do not use a P.O. Box address.)

Is your residential address a permanent address? Yes No

Billing Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____
(If different from residential address.)

Social Security Number (last four digits): _____ (If you are a member of a Tribal nation and do not have a social security number, you may provide your Tribal identification number.)

Date of Birth: _____

Telephone Number: _____ (if existing service)

Telephone number where you can be reached or receive messages: _____

Are you currently receiving Lifeline assistance through any other telephone provider? Yes No

I am applying for: Lifeline (monthly telephone service discount)

I, one or more of my dependents, or my household currently participates in one or more of the following programs:
(Check all that apply.) MUST INCLUDE A COPY OF AT LEAST ONE DOCUMENT.

- Medicaid (e.g. Title XIX/Medical State Supplemental Assistance)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as Food Stamps)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8)
- Low-Income Energy Home Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)
- National School Lunch Program's Free Lunch Program
- OR My household income is at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. The number of individuals in my household is: _____.

Name of eligible person if different than the applicant _____ Relationship to applicant _____

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).

2014 Health and Human Services Poverty Guidelines

Number in Residence	135% Guideline (Annual)	Number in Residence	135% Guideline (Annual)
1	\$15,755	5	\$37,679
2	\$21,236	6	\$43,160
3	\$26,717	7	\$48,641
4	\$32,198	8	\$54,122

For each additional person after 8, add \$5,481 to the annual guideline.

Source: Federal Register, Vol. 79 No. 14, January 22, 2014, pp. 3593-3594

Important Information

You will be required to provide documentation of eligibility before receiving Lifeline service.

Lifeline is a federal government assistance benefit and willfully making false statements to obtain the benefit can result in fines, imprisonment, de-enrollment, or being barred from the program.

Only one Lifeline service is available per household. A household is defined, for the purposes of the Lifeline program, as any individual or group of individuals who live together at the same address as one economic unit. An "economic unit" consists of all adult individuals contributing to and sharing in the income and expenses of a household. A household may include related and unrelated persons. A household is not permitted to receive Lifeline benefits from multiple providers. Violation of the one-per-household limitation constitutes a violation of the Federal Communications Commission's rules and will result in your de-enrollment from the program, and possible prosecution by the United States government. Lifeline is a non-transferable benefit and you may not transfer your benefit to any other person.

I certify, under penalty of perjury, that (initial each statement):

____ (1) I meet the income-based or program-based eligibility criteria for receiving Lifeline, provided in 47 C.F.R. § 54.409. I have provided documentation of eligibility;

____ (2) I understand that I must notify the carrier within 30 days if, for any reason, I no longer satisfy the criteria for receiving Lifeline including, as relevant, if I no longer meet the income-based or program-based criteria for receiving Lifeline support, I am receiving more than one Lifeline benefit, or another member of my household is receiving a Lifeline benefit and that I may be penalized for failing to do so;

____ (3) If I move to a new address, I will provide that new address to the telephone company within 30 days;

____ (4) My household will receive only one Lifeline service and, to the best of my knowledge, my household is not already receiving a Lifeline service;

____ (5) I acknowledge that I may be required to re-certify my continued eligibility for Lifeline at any time, and my failure to re-certify as to my continued eligibility will result in de-enrollment and the termination of my Lifeline benefits pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 54.405(e)(4);

____ (6) I give West River Telephone Company permission to give my name, telephone number, and address to the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) or its agent to confirm that my household only receives one Lifeline benefit. If USAC finds that my household receives more than one Lifeline benefit, USAC will notify the telephone companies, and I will have to select one service and I will be de-enrolled from the other.

I, the Lifeline applicant/subscriber, acknowledge that WRCTC will transmit to the federal administrator of the National Lifeline Accountability Database the above-referenced information about the Lifeline account and/or service for inclusion into the Database to detect and prevent fraudulent or duplicative receipt of benefits from the Lifeline program, and hereby consent to transmission of the information for purposes allowed by law relating to administration of the Lifeline program.

By signing below, I attest that the information contained in this application and certification form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and that providing false or fraudulent information to receive Lifeline benefits is punishable by law.

Signature

Date

Provide the completed Lifeline Assistance Application and Certification Form and proof of eligibility to West River Cooperative Telephone Company, PO Box 39, Bison, SD 57620.

Tribal Lifeline & Link Up Assistance Application and Certification Form

(Please Print or Type)

Company Name: **West River Cooperative Telephone Company**

SPIN: **143002255**

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ Middle Initial: _____

Residential Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

(Do not use a P.O. Box address.)

Is your residential address a permanent address? Yes No

Billing Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

(If different from residential address.)

Social Security Number (last four digits): _____ If you are a member of a Tribal nation and do not have a social security number, you may provide your Tribal identification number: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Telephone Number: _____ *(if existing service)*

Telephone number where you can be reached or receive messages: _____

Are you currently receiving Lifeline assistance through any other telephone provider? Yes No

I am applying for:

- Tribal Lifeline *(monthly telephone service discount)*
 Tribal Link Up *(telephone connection charge discount)*

"Tribal lands" are defined as any federally-recognized Indian tribe's reservation, pueblo or colony; Indian Allotments; and areas that fall outside the boundaries of existing Tribal lands but have been designated by the Federal Communications Commission as Tribal lands for the purpose of receiving Tribal Lifeline and Tribal Link Up support.

I am applying as an individual living on "tribal lands": Yes No

I, one or more of my dependents, or my household currently participates in one or more of the following programs: *(Check all that apply.)* Must include a copy of at least one document.

- Medicaid (e.g. Title XIX/Medical State Supplemental Assistance)
 Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
 Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8)
 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as Food Stamps)
 Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
 Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) or Tribal TANF
 National School Lunch Program's Free Lunch Program
 Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance
 Head Start (if income eligibility criteria are met)
 Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations
 OR My household income is at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. The number of individuals in my household is: _____.

Name of eligible person if different than the applicant _____

Relationship to applicant _____

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

2014 Health and Human Services Poverty Guidelines

Number in Residence	135% Guideline (Annual)	Number in Residence	135% Guideline (Annual)
1	\$15,755	5	\$37,679
2	\$21,236	6	\$43,160
3	\$26,717	7	\$48,641
4	\$32,198	8	\$54,122

For each additional person after 8, add \$5,481 to the annual guideline.

Source: Federal Register, Vol. 79 No. 14, January 22, 2014, pp. 3593-3594

Important Information

You will be required to provide documentation of eligibility before receiving Lifeline service.

Tribal Lifeline and Tribal Link Up are federal government assistance benefits and willfully making false statements to obtain the benefits can result in fines, imprisonment, de-enrollment, or being barred from the programs.

Only one Lifeline service is available per household. A household is defined, for the purposes of the Lifeline program, as any individual or group of individuals who live together at the same address as one economic unit. An "economic unit" consists of all adult individuals contributing to and sharing in the income and expenses of a household. A household may include related and unrelated persons. A household is not permitted to receive Lifeline benefits from multiple providers. Violation of the one-per-household limitation constitutes a violation of the Federal Communications Commission's rules and will result in your de-enrollment from the program, and possible prosecution from the United States government. Lifeline is a non-transferable benefit and you may not transfer your benefit to any other person.

I certify, under penalty of perjury, that (initial each statement):

____(1) I meet the income-based or program-based eligibility criteria for receiving Lifeline, provided in 47 C.F.R. § 54.409. I have provided documentation of eligibility if required to do so;

____(2) I understand that I must notify the carrier within 30 days if, for any reason, I no longer satisfy the criteria for receiving Lifeline including, as relevant, if I no longer meet the income-based or program-based criteria for receiving Lifeline support, I am receiving more than one Lifeline benefit, or another member of my household is receiving a Lifeline benefit and that I may be penalized for failing to do so;

____(3) If I am seeking to qualify for Lifeline as an eligible resident of Tribal lands, I live on Tribal lands, as defined in 47 C.F.R § 54.400(e);

____(4) If I move to a new address, I will provide that new address to the telephone company within 30 days;

____(5) My household will receive only one Lifeline service and, to the best of my knowledge, my household is not already receiving a Lifeline service;

____(6) I acknowledge that I may be required to re-certify my continued eligibility for Lifeline at any time, and my failure to re-certify as to my continued eligibility will result in de-enrollment and the termination of my Lifeline benefits pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 54.405(e)(4);

____(7)) I give West River Telephone Company permission to give my name, telephone number, and address to the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) or its agent to confirm that my household only receives one Lifeline benefit. If USAC finds that my household receives more than one Lifeline benefit, USAC will notify the telephone companies, and I will have to select one service and I will be de-enrolled from the other.

I, the Lifeline applicant/subscriber, acknowledge that WRCTC will transmit to the federal administrator of the National Lifeline Accountability Database the above-referenced information about the Lifeline account and/or service for inclusion into the Database to detect and prevent fraudulent or duplicative receipt of benefits from the Lifeline program, and hereby consent to transmission of the information for purposes allowed by law relating to administration of the Lifeline program. By signing below, I attest that the information contained in this application and certification form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and that providing false or fraudulent information to receive Lifeline benefits is punishable by law.

Signature

Date

Provide the completed Lifeline and Tribal Link Up Application and Certification Form and proof of eligibility to West River Cooperative Telephone Company, PO Box 39, Bison, SD 57620.

**West River Cooperative Telephone Company
Lifeline & Link-Up Advertising/Outreach
2014-2015**

Each month, Lifeline and Link-Up applications were included in the new member packets. All year long, information and applications are made available at our front desk in our central office and on our website (<http://www.sdplains.com/lifeline-and-link-up/>). Link to Lifeline information is available on our Facebook page, under the “About” link (www.facebook.com/WRCTC). All newsletters are provided online at www.wrctc.coop.

June 2014

- Provided Lifeline information and applications during Grand Electric’s Annual Meeting.
- Article in newsletter about the Lifeline Program.

September 2014

- Provided information and applications at the Tailgate Parties in Faith, Bison and Lemmon.

October 2014

- Provided information and applications at the Tailgate Parties in Newell and Buffalo.
- Information and applications were made available at West River Cooperative Telephone’s Annual Meeting.

January 2015

- Information and applications were made available for interested individuals at the Vale Ag Show in Vale, SD.

March 2015

- Information and applications were made available at the KBJM Farm & Home Show in Lemmon, SD.

May 2015

- News release was sent out to all local newspapers.
- Lifeline & Link-Up information and applications for Montana, South Dakota, North Dakota and Tribal Lands were sent to all surrounding clinics, health nurses, and assisted living centers if they needed them.

June 2015

- Lifeline Program information provided in the newsletter.
- Lifeline information and applications available at Grand Electric’s Annual Meeting.

M A Y 2015
N E W S R E L E A S E

WEST RIVER COOPERATIVE TELEPHONE COMPANY
PO BOX 39
BISON, SD 57620
605-244-5213
CONTACT: Rachel Eggebo

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Lifeline: Affordable Telephone Service for Income-Eligible Consumers

Background

Lifeline is a government benefit program that provides discounts on monthly telephone service for eligible low-income consumers to help ensure they have the opportunities and security that telephone service affords, including being able to connect to jobs, family, and 911 services. Lifeline is supported by the federal Universal Service Fund (USF).

What Benefits are Available Under the Lifeline Program?

Lifeline assistance lowers the cost of basic monthly local telephone service. An eligible customer will receive a discount of \$9.25 per month. Federal rules prohibit eligible low-income consumers from receiving more than ONE Lifeline service per household.

Lifeline can also include Toll Limitation Service, which enables a telephone subscriber to limit the amount of long distance calls that can be made from a telephone.

Link Up provides eligible low-income consumers living on Tribal lands with a one-time discount of up to \$100 on the initial installation or activation of a wireline or wireless telephone for the primary residence. Tribal Lands Link Up also allows consumers to pay the remaining amount that they owe on a deferred schedule, interest-free. Federal rules prohibit eligible low-income consumers from receiving more than ONE Link Up discount at a primary residence. Eligible consumers may be eligible for Link Up again only after moving to a new primary residence. Link Up support is only offered to carriers who are building out infrastructure on Tribal lands so not all carriers may discount their activation fee. Enhanced benefits are provided to low-income consumers who live on a federally recognized Indian Tribe's reservation.

How Do I Qualify for Lifeline Discounts?

The Lifeline program is available to eligible low-income consumers in every state, territory, commonwealth, and on Tribal lands. You must be eligible to enroll. To participate in the program, consumers must either have an income that is at or below 135% of the federal Poverty Guidelines or participate in one of the following assistance programs:

- Medicaid;
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Food Stamps or SNAP);
- 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;
- Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance;
- Tribally-Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TTANF);
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR);
- Head Start (if income eligibility criteria are met); or
- State assistance programs (if applicable).

When you qualify for any of the above programs, you must complete a Lifeline Assistance Application. For more information, or to find out if you qualify for the programs, call your local telephone company, state Public Utility Commission, or the Federal Communications Commission at 1-888-CALL-FCC. You may also visit the "Lifeline Across America" Web site [www.lifeline.gov].

Lifeline: Affordable Telephone Service for Income-Eligible Consumers

Background

Lifeline is a government benefit program that provides discounts on monthly telephone 376-3248 service for eligible low-income consumers to help ensure they have the opportunities and security that telephone service affords, including being able to connect to jobs, family, and 911 services. Lifeline is supported by the Federal Universal Service Fund (USF).

What Benefits are Available Under the Lifeline Program?

Lifeline assistance lowers the cost of basic monthly local telephone service. An eligible customer will receive a discount of \$9.25 per month. Federal rules prohibit eligible low-income consumers from receiving more than ONE Lifeline service per household. That is, eligible low-income consumers may receive a Lifeline discount on either a wireline or a wireless service, but may not receive a Lifeline discount on both services at the same time. Additionally, only ONE Lifeline service may be obtained per household. "Household" is defined as any individual or group of individuals who live together at the same address as one economic unit. An "economic unit" is defined as "all adult individuals contributing to and sharing in the income and expenses of a household." Lifeline support is available to eligible low-income consumers living in group living facilities. Lifeline applicants may demonstrate when initially enrolling in the program that any other Lifeline recipients residing at their residential address are part of a separate household.

Lifeline can also include Toll Limitation Service, which enables a telephone subscriber to limit the amount of long distance calls that 257-2718 can be made from a telephone.

Link Up provides eligible low-income consumers living on Tribal lands with a one-time discount of up to \$100 on the initial installation or activation of a wireline or wireless telephone for the primary residence. Tribal Lands Link Up also allows consumers to pay the remaining amount that they owe on a deferred schedule, interest-free. Federal 972-4573 rules prohibit eligible low-income consumers from receiving more than ONE Link Up discount at a primary residence. Eligible consumers may be eligible for Link Up again only after moving to a new primary residence. Link Up support is only offered to carriers who are building out infrastructure on Tribal lands so not all carriers



Susie Skjoldal Resigns



Customer Service/Marketing Supervisor, Susie Skjoldal, resigned from her position at WRCTC, effective April 22. Susie began her career at Grand on June 17, 1996 as a Secretary which then changed to the title of Customer Service Representative in 2004. She celebrated 15 years in June of 2011 and a few months later in November, was promoted to Customer Service Supervisor, overseeing the Customer Service Representatives.

Susie's kindness and compassion 456-1984 for others and her bubbly personality will be greatly missed at the Cooperative. She was a dedicated employee who balanced her life on their ranch north of Bison with her second home here at the office for nearly 19 years. We wish her nothing but the best in her future endeavors.

(continued on page 4)

New WRCTC Members

Bison, Meadow, Sorum

Stateline Construction, LLC 866-4460
Zoller, Laurie 244-5256

Buffalo

Bowen, Oliver 375-3865
Bruce, David & Cathy 375-3868
Madsen, Trent 375-3180
Marron, Julia 375-3160
Hanson, Cheyenne 797-4654
Schell, Tim (Tenant) 972-4591

Lemmon

Dauwen, Stefanie 374-4294
Dietz, Meagan 376-4298
Hammer, Joanne 374-4367
Holdsclaw, Leanna 376-4427
Modern Expressions Fabric 374-4431

Newell

Dunn, Lynn 456-2273
Fehr, Jessica 456-3659
Steffe, Dirl & Vicki 456-3729
Yost, Delwin & Susan 456-3365

Nisland

Kessel, Quinn 257-2892
Shaykett, Brodie 257-2894
Tope, Milton 257-2893

**HELP is only a phone
call away (24/7 Support)**

SDPlains Help Desk 888-464-9513
WildBlue Help Desk 888-212-5370

Find Your Phone Number

Ten telephone numbers were hidden in last month's newsletter. Those members who hunted and found their number were: Larry Strickland, Belle Fourche; Dale Pies, Vale; Jerry Nelson, Buffalo; Wade Hofer, Meadow; Lola Hedstrom, Bison and Kevin Deschamps, Newell. Hidden in this issue are ten new numbers. If you find YOUR number, all you have to do is notify our office. The \$10 will then be deducted off your telephone bill. New connect numbers do not count. **Deadline is June 22, 2015.**

Lifeline (continued)

may discount their activation fee. Enhanced benefits are provided to low-income consumers who live on a federally recognized Indian Tribe's reservation.

How Do I Qualify for Lifeline Discounts?

The Lifeline program is 788-2953 available to eligible low-income consumers in every state, territory, commonwealth, and on Tribal lands. You must be eligible to enroll. To participate in the program, consumers must either have an income that is at or below 135% of the federal Poverty Guidelines or participate in one of the following assistance programs:

- Medicaid 374-5314
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Food Stamps or SNAP)
- 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
- Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance
- Tribally-Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TTANF)
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)
- Head Start (Tribal lands only if eligible)
- State assistance programs (if applicable)

When you qualify for any of the above programs, you must complete a Lifeline Assistance Application. For more information, please contact our office at 605-244-5213 or 777.



**Call
Before
You Dig**

**Don't assume you know what's below.
Protect yourself and those around you.
Call 811 every time.**