



## Rural areas still failing to receive calls

Despite the FCC's efforts and enforcement actions, rural consumers and businesses continue to fail to receive calls. According to a recent NTCA (National Telephone Cooperative As-

### Fiber completed in San Jose area

WT Services teams are working on installation of fiber optic cable on East Gracy in Hereford and in the San Jose community just outside of southwestern Hereford city limits. These installations will bring fiber service to the last of the old XIT customers on the old head end.

"With this upgrade customers in these locations will be able to enjoy programming that the rest of Hereford has had for some time, including Pay Per View sporting events, over 200 TV channels on video and up to one gig on Internet," says Rich Kendrick, manager of finance, accounting and radio systems for WT Services.

WT Services will be contacting customers in these new fiber locations in the future for sign-up for new services and to arrange for any necessary repairs and installation such as rewiring, set-top boxes etc.

sociation) survey regarding call completion, 80% of the association's members indicated they have experienced call completion problems in the past year. More than one-fourth stated that they receive complaints from subscribers at least weekly.

According to the survey results, the vast majority of failing calls are intended for subscribers of rural local exchange carriers (RLECS), like West Texas Rural Telephone Cooperative. The failed calls are due to "least-cost long distance providers" deciding not to send calls to rural America because it is costlier to operate in the rural areas. They are known to place a "false ring" on the call so that the calling party hears a ring, but the called party doesn't receive the call.

This problem has serious implications. Businesses operating in rural America have reported that they have lost business because they did not receive the call. A neighboring telephone cooperative reported that a member called her doctor in Lubbock with concerns about the effects of the medication

she was prescribed. The doctor's office heard a ring when they called the patient. The patient never received a call. The situation could have been life threatening.

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### Bushland customers are now served by localized channels

WT Services customers in Bushland can now take advantage of two local cable TV channels serving the community including a community Bulletin Board on Channel 201 that includes school lunch menus, local advertising, birthday listings, school events, etc. and a weather channel on Channel 267 that provides information pertinent to the Bushland zip code, including forecasts, watches and warnings.

Contractors for WT Services have been installing the cable necessary for residents in the Prairie West north neighborhood to gain future access to their Internet, cable TV, and phone services. The contractors have worked over a time span of several weeks to complete the project.

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STILL FAILING

BUSHLAND  
CHANNELS  
LOCALIZED

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PROPOSED  
SET-TOP BOX  
RULES ARGUED

CUSTOMIZED  
PHONE SYSTEMS

### Draft payment nets discount of 1%

WT Services customers can receive a one percent discount by paying their bill by bank draft.

Customers who authorize draft payment agree to have their bank account drafted for the amount of their outstanding balance on their account with WT Services. Drafts will occur between the 20th and 23rd of each month.

To arrange for payment of your WT Services bill via bank draft and net the one percent savings, contact the WT Services office in Hereford at 119 East 4th or in Friona at 1010 Columbia to obtain the necessary authorization form that includes bank routing and account information.

**Hereford: A Smart Community—with Fiber to the Premise—by WT Services.**

## Calls to rural areas are still failing...from Page 1

After years of advocacy initiatives by NTCA—The Rural Broadband Association and its members, rural call completion legislation will move to the Senate for consideration. Under the leadership of Chairman John Thune (R-SD), members of the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee voted during an executive session in late June to advance the Improving Rural Call Quality and Reliability Act.

The legislation requires least-cost routers to register with and follow standards set by the FCC. Additionally, to ensure greater transparency in the call completion marketplace, originating providers must use registered least-cost routers in seeking to complete their calls.

NTCA issued a statement from Chief Executive Officer Shirley Bloomfield applauding the committee's action.

“NTCA thanks Sen. Amy Klouchar for her sponsorship of the bill, her unwavering support of rural America and dedication to ending the call completion issue that has been plaguing rural communities for years. The advancement of the Improving Rural Call Quality and Reliability Act

of 2016 to the full Senate for consideration is another important milestone in seeking a resolution that has been a long time coming. We also appreciate Committee Chairman John Thune's (R-SD) continued leadership on this issue that ensured the

legislation's path to passage continues.

Inability of people to receive phone calls weakens the reliability of our telecommunications networks and threatens the safety, commerce and well-being of people not just in rural

America but throughout the country. We are optimistic this legislation can play an important role in putting an end to the issue once and for all and we look forward to continued engagement with Congress and the FCC.”

## NTCA , lawmakers continue arguments against FCC's proposed set-top box rules

Staff of the National Telephone Cooperative Association —the Rural Broadband Association and lawmakers have continued to argue that the FCC should abandon proposed rules regarding set-top boxes.

The proposed rules could impact consumer privacy and customer service, adding significant costs for small rural multi-channel video programming distributors (MVPDs) that can ill afford such expenses.

NTCA staff say proposed rules could lead to a pause in innovation in the MVPD industry, discouraging small rural distributors operating in a “break even at best” line of business, and making them likely to hold back on investments in improving quality and availability of their networks for fear of additional

investments being needed to comply with new rules.

NTCA, rural reps and lawmakers further argued that consumer demand and the market may achieve the FCC's goals absent regulatory intervention, making the proposal unnecessary at this time.

The NTCA/lawmaker group stated that a permanent exemption for

small MVPDs serving less than one million subscribers would be welcome to ensure that small providers are not forced out of the market by an immediate need to comply with proposed rules.

NTCA has filed comments and reply comments urging the FCC to reconsider its proposal.

## WT Services can provide custom phone systems

Telephone systems customized to your needs are available from WT Services.

Systems can be designed for your business and office needs.

A representative from WT Services will first visit your location to determine needs, then write a proposal, and arrange for

installation once a plan is approved.

WT Services is experienced in providing telephone systems for business offices, school systems and government offices, among other applications.

Contact Doug Baker at WT Services, 364-7311, to discuss your phone system needs.