

Eberl, Stacy L.

From: Sharon Kickertz-Gerbig <skg12151@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 10, 2021 10:22 PM
To: Eberl, Stacy L.
Subject: Re: landline phone update

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Hi Stacy,

Hope you are having a good day. Here is an update on the land line phone issue.

The landline phone works off and on at the current time. Today, (Sunday) it is not working again.

We are not using the satellite phone, it does not make sense to have to go outside to make and receive (we don't know when they will come) calls. The shape of the handset does not allow for Gordon's pacemaker checks either.

Cal from Century Link dropped off information on using HughesNet for voice services several days. I did call HughesNet, and also talked to the tech guy we use for or internet through HughesNet (I switched to them from Viastat last summer as we were having such problems with internet service through them). Both the HughesNet rep from the company and Tyrone said that the voice mail would work with the internet through HughesNet. As long as there is electrical power and clear internet service, it would work. We would not be able to use our current land line phone number, as apparently it can not be transferred. We have had that number for over 30 years, so in my mind that is an issue. I am also nervous about not having 911 availability if the power is out, and that can be an issue here. I also have a concern if the internet does not work, which also happens, we are without any phone service, including 911. I have checked our personal cell phones, and they do not have the ability to be used on the internet as a regular smart phone can be. We both have smart phones (mine is new within the last month), but they are trac phones as we do not get cell phone service here. For Gordon to have the ability to have his pacemaker checkups with the current machine we have (Clinic will not change it until the pacemaker battery quits, and it has two years of life yet when they check it), we will have to unplug our main phone base, and plug in the old style land line phone as it has the curved handset that fits the machine that transfers the information to the clinic.

I have not talked to Dorm myself, but Gordon has. From what Gordon has said, I don't think that Dorm would sign up for internet and the voice program through HughesNet. (Dorm does not have a cell phone, or a computer).

We have not had any contact with anyone from Century Link except for Cal, the repair tech based in Dickinson, (two times) since the hearing (1. to drop off the satellite phone, and 2. to drop off papers for HughesNet). I get the feeling we are being pushed aside and they are hoping we just go away.

Thanks for your time.

Sharon

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On Wednesday, January 6, 2021, 07:49:46 AM MST, Eberl, Stacy L. <steberl@nd.gov> wrote:

Hi Sharon – Just wondering how things have been going and whether or not they provided you with an antenna or some other fix to get the phones working inside your home?? Would appreciate an update when you have a chance.

Thanks...and hope all is well!

Stacy

From: Johnson, Brian L. <brljohnson@nd.gov>
Sent: Monday, December 21, 2020 9:31 AM
To: Eberl, Stacy L. <steberl@nd.gov>; Sharon Kickertz-Gerbig <skg12151@yahoo.com>
Subject: RE: landline phone update

I did some quick research and it appears that there is an antenna that is available that allows you to use a satellite phone inside a home. This seems like something that they should be providing as well.

Just a thought.

Brian

From: Eberl, Stacy L. <steberl@nd.gov>
Sent: Monday, December 21, 2020 9:27 AM
To: Sharon Kickertz-Gerbig <skg12151@yahoo.com>
Cc: Johnson, Brian L. <brljohnson@nd.gov>
Subject: RE: landline phone update

Thanks for the update Sharon.....and yes, please keep us updated as you continue to test and use the satellite phone.

Have a great Christmas,

Stacy

From: Sharon Kickertz-Gerbig <skg12151@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, December 20, 2020 6:43 PM
To: Eberl, Stacy L. <steberl@nd.gov>
Cc: Johnson, Brian L. <brljohnson@nd.gov>
Subject: landline phone update

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Hi Stacy and Brian,

I wanted to give you an update on this landline phone situation.

We arrived home that Thursday evening after the PSC hearing and the landline phone was working. It worked for awhile (Sporadically) on Friday and Saturday, then was out for a couple days and then back on on Monday of last week. It has been sporadic since then, I would say working more than not working (at least when we are home, not sure what it does when we are gone during the day), but it is not working today.

Cal, the technician, brought the satellite phone out to me at work in Medora on Tuesday afternoon. He showed me a little bit on how to use it. He said that for us to use it, we need to be standing outside with a clear view of the sky to get it started so it would pick up the satellites it could, and then get the GPS coordinates. It is true that we do need to be outside, which is not convenient in winter, at night, etc. I tried it by standing outside on the west side of our house (our front door is on the east of the house, which again is not convenient) when I got home that night, and only got 1 to 2 bars of satellite connections. I tried on the east side of the house, but it did not work there either as the house was in the way. I suppose I could have crawled over the oilfield pipe fence and stand in the bull pasture, but did not want to do that at that time. I could not make a call while outside. The instruction book also states clearly that calls need to be made when a person is outside.

The satellite phone does not work in the house at all. Cal did give us a new 575 number to replace our old number which we have had for over 30 years, and our old land line phone will do about a half ring and then it transfers to the satellite phone. We are not able to answer either phone here in the house. So we have not been able to receive any calls, personal or business. That is not acceptable to us.

When someone does call, they hear a short ring and then it rings again, for several rings. There is not an answering machine on the satellite phone. That also is not acceptable, as we are not waiting in the house for the phone to ring.

According to the information provided on the flash-drive that came in the box of the phone, the phone is a 2014 model. It has been recycled, I guess it was last used by some firefighters someplace, as each of the three boxes that the three customers received has a different last name on it.

When calls are placed using the satellite phone, it will show up on the recipient's caller ID as an international phone number. I know that if it is was me receiving that call, I would not answer it. It will not show either our old or this new 575 prefix number. That is not a situation we will be comfortable with.

The phone face is flat, so it will not work to do Gordon's pace-maker checks that are scheduled by the Heart and Lung Clinic in Bismarck. He has about two years left on the battery on his current pace-maker, and when I asked in September when we had to make the special trip to Bismarck for his checkup as our land line phone did not work, they will not replace the machine that we have at home to hook up to until the battery of his pace-maker is replaced.

I will continue to keep you posted on the status of this option that Century Link has proposed. As of now, I am not very impressed with it.

Thanks for your help. I hope you and your family have a Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year. Stay safe!!!!

Sharon G.

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