

In Touch

JANUARY 2024



Thinking Back and Moving Forward

The start of a new year encourages all of us to reflect on the previous one. What have we accomplished? For what are we grateful?

Venture Communications made technology upgrades in 2023 and actively supported our community, which we couldn't have done without customers like you. We can't wait to see what's in store for 2024!

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Let's see what we'll build in the new year

At Venture Communications, we do more than build fiber networks. We help build relationships, communities, opportunities, and quality of life. However, we don't do this important work alone. We do it in partnership with all of you, our loyal customers.

Communications technology is all about connections. Our wish for the year ahead is that our local connections grow even stronger.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

National Do Not Call Registry

The Federal Communications Commission and Federal Trade Commission established the National Do Not Call Registry to help you reduce unwanted calls. Most commercial telemarketers are not allowed to call you if your number is listed on the registry, which covers both interstate and intrastate telemarketing calls.

However, the National Do Not Call Registry will not prevent all unwanted calls. It does NOT cover calls from organizations with which you have established a business relationship, calls for which you have given prior written consent, calls which are not commercial or do not include unsolicited ads, or calls by or on behalf of tax-exempt nonprofit organizations.

You may register your residential phone numbers (landline and cellular) for free, and they will remain on the National Do Not Call Registry unless you remove them. If you receive an unwanted call after your number has been on the registry for 31 days, report it to the FTC at www.donotcall.gov/report.html.

To register by phone, call 888.382.1222. You must call from the number you wish to register. For the hearing impaired, TTY call 866.290.4236. Or register online at www.donotcall.gov.



Fiber Optics Battery Backup

A backup power supply (battery) is required in order for your digital voice service to be in service in the event of a power outage. A backup battery, like the one Venture Communications has provided and installed, allows regular corded landline phones to work during a power outage, giving customers the ability to connect to 911 emergency services. Without a battery backup, customers will not be able to make any calls.

If a power outage occurs, make sure you have a corded single-line phone connected directly to the ONT (optical network terminal) or your in-home wiring (wall jack) and the ONT connected directly to the battery backup unit. If you connect a cordless phone, it will not function without a separate battery backup, and most cordless phones are not so equipped.

Venture's battery backup does not provide power to any service other than voice. Security systems, medical monitoring devices, and other equipment will not run on a home phone backup battery.

The backup battery provided by Venture is expected to last up to eight hours in the event of a power outage—depending on battery age, usage, and environment. Proper battery care includes storing at normal room temperatures. Battery backup units will display a light when the battery needs to be replaced. If you see this light, call Venture at 605-852-2224. We also offer a 24-hour backup solution for customers who feel they need additional backup time for their home voice services, which is available for \$170.95. Contact Venture for warranty information or more details.

Attention Students: Don't Miss This Scholarship Opportunity

Each year, Venture Communications awards 14 Citizenship and Community Service Scholarships, in the amount of \$750 each, to students from high schools throughout our serving area.

To be considered for one of these scholarships, a student must meet this criteria:

- Be a graduating high school senior in 2024
- Have a parent or legal guardian who's an active subscriber to a Venture service
- Have a cumulative B grade point average or above

Guidelines for the 2024 scholarships are available from the high school guidance counselor or at www.venturecomm.net. Deadline to submit applications is March 8, 2024.



Lifeline and Link-Up Programs

Venture Communications is proud to have helped many customers this past year through the FCC's Lifeline Link-Up Program, providing discounted installation and monthly telephone service to qualifying consumers.

Lifeline

You may be eligible for the Lifeline Program, up to \$9.25 monthly savings if you are a participant in at least one of the following programs: Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8), or Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit.

In addition, you may be eligible for the monthly savings if your household income is at or below 135% of the federal poverty guidelines. The current qualifying income levels range from \$19,683 for a single person household to \$68,256 for a family of eight.

Enhanced Lifeline

The Enhanced Lifeline Program provides telephone service to anyone who lives on tribal lands. It expands the eligibility requirements listed under the Lifeline Program to also include participation in: Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance programs, Tribally Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Tribal Head Start, or the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations.

Link Up

Another Federal Program, Link-Up, provides for financial assistance with no connection charges for new customers living on tribal land.

If you meet the eligibility requirement, you can apply 1 of 2 ways:

1. For a quicker response — complete your application online at www.lifelinesupport.org
2. Mail your paper application to the Lifeline Support Center.

Applications are available online at lifelinesupport.org or at your local Venture Communications office. If you have any questions about Lifeline or Link-Up, call us at 605-852-2224.

Important Notice About Your Account

Federal law allows us to use information from your current records to tell you about new products and services that may satisfy your communications needs, unless you notify us otherwise.

What is this information?

Customer Proprietary Network Information (CPNI) relates to the telecommunications services you receive from Venture Communications.

How can we use this information?

We can use it to advise you about new, innovative communications services, technology, and products offered by Venture Communications or our subsidiaries, which include Venture Wireless and Venture Vision. We DO NOT sell or in any way provide this information to any other company other than the 911 records we are required by law to provide if you are a telephone customer.

What action is necessary on my part to show consent?

No action is necessary. If you do not contact us within 30 days and indicate we may not continue providing you with marketing and educational mailings, we will continue to do so.

What if I do not consent?

Contact us at 605-852-2224, and you will not receive company information from us moving forward.



Holiday Coloring Contest Winners

There are clearly some talented young artists in our communities. Thanks to all the children who participated in our Holiday Coloring Contest this year. It was fun to look through their festive artwork, yet difficult to choose just one winner from each category. Merry Christmas and have a colorful New Year!



Toddler Ages 1–2
Winner: Cora

Preschool Ages 3–4
Winner: Daelyn

K–1st Grade
Winner: Ryan

2nd–3rd Grade
Winner: Eunice

Venture Communications Cooperative Statement of Nondiscrimination

In accordance with Federal civil right law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institution participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communications for program information (e.g., braille, large print, audiotape, America Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice & TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint-filing_cust.html and at any USDA office and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call 866.632.9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail; U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Ave SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 (2) Fax: 202.690.7442; or (3) Email; program.intake@usda.gov. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.