



North Carolina Telecommunications Industry Association

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N.C. Telephone Companies Support Hurricane Katrina Relief
NCTIA Members Answer When the Community Calls

SANFORD, N.C. – North Carolina Telecommunications Industry Association (NCTIA) member companies are helping Hurricane Katrina evacuees stay in touch with family and friends.

After Hurricane Katrina slammed into the Gulf Coast region many of North Carolina's local telecommunications companies have been providing free communications services to evacuees displaced to the region. Phone banks have been set up in shelters throughout the state providing free local and long distance calls to those living in the shelters. Free high-speed Internet service has been offered to evacuees to help them contact missing people and search for jobs.

Several member companies have made monetary donations to the Red Cross and United Way designating their dollars be used for Katrina survivors and rebuilding the Gulf Coast. Many telecommunications employees also have donated time, supplies and money to the victims of Hurricane Katrina.

In aggregate, NCTIA member companies have already provided millions in monetary and in-kind support. For example:

ATMC: Atlantic Telephone Membership Corp. sent out an e-mail announcing that its board had made a sizeable donation to the American Red Cross and that the company is accepting donations internally for a contribution on behalf of all ATMC employees. To date, \$350 has been collected internally.

CT Communications: CT Communications has a long history of providing needed support to the communities we serve. The company has been in contact with the agencies coordinating the majority of relief efforts in our region to determine the areas of most urgent need. In response, CT Communications recently provided 350 long distance phone cards to evacuees who were housed at the Charlotte Coliseum, and has donated \$10,000 to address the needs of victims of this tragedy. The company will continue to work with local agencies to ensure the donation addresses the most urgent needs for emergency support.

MebTel: MebTel Communications has offered Mebane residents the use of three high-speed lines (DSL) in its business office to help contact missing people, job search and assist with other needs. MebTel's sister company (GulfTel Communications in Foley, Ala.) had five employees in New Orleans. GulfTel continues to pay these employees and is bringing them and their families to Alabama, where they will work until further notice. Additionally, MebTel finished its United Way campaign for 2006—with significant increases. In 2004, MebTel's contribution to United Way increased by

124 percent over 2003. In 2006, MebTel's contribution increased by 174 percent over 2005. After Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast, MebTel added another 34 percent to the campaign and earmarked the funds for Katrina relief.

North State Communications: North State Communications is providing free communication services to evacuees that have been displaced to High Point. North State has also assisted with local organizations in coordinating a local food drive. A cash donation has been made as well.

SkyLine: SkyLine Membership Corp. teamed with its affiliate, Carolina West Wireless, to serve as one of several collection points for needed supplies that are being sent south to support the Hurricane Katrina relief effort. These supplies included everything from water and baby supplies to toiletries and phone cards. SkyLine employees are providing immediate financial assistance through Project Teamwork, an employee-funded crisis relief program, and they are providing additional financial support to the local American Red Cross as it responds to the growing number of evacuees seeking shelter and financial assistance in North Carolina's High Country.

Sprint Nextel: Sprint Nextel is providing substantial resources and relief to individuals and communities within the areas impacted by Hurricane Katrina. Included in Sprint's support are cash contributions, donated phones, calling cards, billing relief and employee volunteerism. To date, Sprint's cash and in-kind donations equal a total contribution of more than \$7 million. The Sprint Foundation donated \$250,000 to the American Red Cross hurricane relief effort. Sprint employees donated \$100,000, and Sprint matched the employee contributions. Sprint also is providing in-kind support through the donation of more than 40,000 prepaid calling cards and the distribution of some 2,500 phones to the Red Cross, other relief workers and at shelters. So far, Sprint relief for the Red Cross totals \$3.5 million.

In support of first responders and other public safety personnel who are working around the clock risking their own lives to save others, Sprint donated more than 6,000 phones and spent \$1 million to provide these individuals with 3,000 meals a day for two weeks. The company also set up banks of pay phones in some communities to provide free local calls. More information, including photographs, is available online in the Sprint City Press Kit at http://www2.sprint.com/mr/cda_pkDetail.do?id=780.

Surry TMC: Surry Telephone Membership Corp. is joining Carolina West Wireless Inc., an affiliate, in a six-county campaign in western North Carolina (using newspaper and radio) to help those impacted by Hurricane Katrina.

TriCounty Telecom: TriCounty Telecom employees held a Beans and Hot Dog lunch Sept. 2. Employees donated money to purchase the supplies and baked goodies for sale, then contributed to the "money can." Over \$300 was raised; the money was used to purchase items for the victims of Hurricane Katrina. TriCounty Telecom joined forces with other Beaufort County businesses and acted as a collection site for drop-off of relief items by the community. The company also received cash donations and used the money to purchase relief items. On Sept. 8, a pick-up truck and trailer packed with food, clothing, diapers, toiletries and other items left TriCounty Telecom and was taken to a central collection site about 30 miles away. Three tractor-trailer loads of donations were sent to Mississippi--two ended up at East Harrison Fire Department in Gulfport, Miss., and one at D'Iberville High School in D'Iberville, Miss.

US LEC: US LEC continues to provide full pay and benefits to affected employees. Additionally, in several cases, displaced employees have been temporarily reassigned to another US LEC office so they can continue work. US LEC has committed to match employee donations dollar for dollar. To date, nearly \$66,000 has been raised for the Red Cross, with more donations pouring in each day. Many US LEC employees have been working around the clock to provide support to their business customers. Another way the company helped businesses stay up and running was by porting local numbers outside the LATA so calls could continue to be placed. Finally, the company rebuilt a portion of its own infrastructure virtually overnight in an effort to continue serving customers.

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