

The Insider



Rural Telephone Company Takes the Heat

This summer's fires have taken their toll across the Northwest, including more than one-half million acres burned near the Idaho-Nevada border. While it is pretty hard to control Mother Nature, Rural Telephone Company technicians did everything in their power to keep the dial tone humming on the lines. While brief phone outages affected customers in Murphy Hot Springs and Jarbidge, service was restored quickly in most areas.

Jarbidge, their phone service was back even before the power came back on due to the efforts of RTC technicians and staff.

The heat of the blaze was so intense that approximately 30 pedestals (those boxes that connect the phone lines to your home) were melted and more than 200 electrical poles were burned. In some areas, technicians were not able to cross fire lines, which caused some delays in



Where electrical outages caused the disruption in service, RTC engineers and technicians brought in generators and laid temporary lines in order to restore phone service.

"Every effort was made to ensure people in the affected areas had dial tone," reported company dispatcher, Lucinda Walker. Most issues were related to electrical power outages that affected phone service. Once electricity was restored, phone service was also back on line. For some people in Roland and

returning service to those residents. All those customers whose pedestals were affected have gotten their phone service back and will see the technicians replacing boxes and wiring over the upcoming months. "We have been in touch with our clients in the area and know how important being able to use the phone is to them," says Walker. "They share our gratitude that the service disruptions were minor and look forward to finishing repair and replacement of those lines and equipment that were lost in the blaze."

New Features on the Horizon for Idaho Customers

Ethernet access and broadband Internet service are among some of the upgrades coming to RTC customers in Prairie, Atlanta, Boise River and Tipanuk, as Rural Telephone Company upgrades its current microwave dishes and repeater station equipment.



"Currently, our clients in these areas have been limited in telecommunications options, such as voice mail and caller ID," says

Chad Grigg, the

engineer overseeing the upgrades. "With the new equipment, they will see more services coming on line that will improve their service and offer them the latest features."

The changeover will affect customers in the area, who may lose phone service for up to four days during the installation. "Unfortunately, there is no way to install the new equipment without first taking out the old," Grigg laments. The process will involve replacing the two microwave transmitters at the central offices in Prairie and Atlanta, aligning the dishes and rewiring the system. Solar power panels and batteries and essential equipment will also be replaced at the two microwave repeater sites at Trinity Mountain and James Creek Summit. "Because these areas are very remote, we will be using helicopters to transport the dishes and equipment." Two crews will be working to ensure the fastest possible installation and restoration of service.

All affected customers will be notified two to three weeks in advance of the installation to minimize the impact of the service disruption. Satellite phones will be available in the community for emergency use.

Did You Know...

RTC customers can choose from a great variety of services, including:

- ☎ Anonymous Call Rejection
- ☎ Automatic Busy Redial
- ☎ Automatic Call Return
- ☎ Call Block
- ☎ Call Forwarding
- ☎ Call Waiting
- ☎ Call Number ID
- ☎ Caller ID
- ☎ Inside Wiring Maintenance

- ☎ Speed Dialing
- ☎ Teen Line/Smart Ring
- ☎ Three-Way Calling

For customers with special needs...

- ☎ Lifeline/Linkup
- ☎ Relay Service (*for the hearing impaired*)

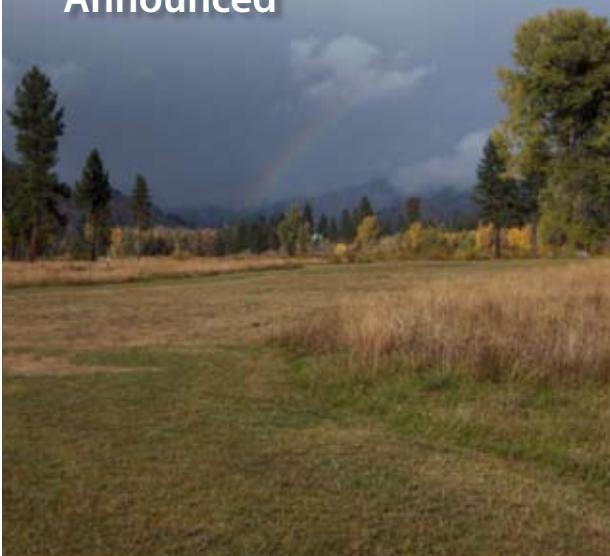
Please visit us at www.rtc.net for more information on these and other commercial and residential services.

RTC.net



"The Americans have need of the telephone, but we do not. We have plenty of messenger boys." *Sir William Preece, chief engineer of the British Post Office, 1876*

2008 Contest Winner Announced



This photo by Jill Wetherrell of Mountain Home, Idaho was selected for RTC 2008 phone book cover. This stormy weather photo near the airstrip at Anderson Dam shows the treasure waiting under the rainbow for residents and visitors of this popular recreational area. Congratulations Jill!

The contest for RTC's telephone book cover takes place each year. Entry notices are sent to RTC's 1,500 customers with their May bills. Deadline for submissions, which can include photography, illustrations, paintings, or other original art, falls on the last day of July.

According to Susan Case, HR Manager at RTC, the company looks for images that reflect the company's customers and where they live. Once all submissions have been received, a panel narrows down the selection to no more than 12, which are then subject to an anonymous employee voting process. The photo with the most votes wins!