

Incoming Long Distance Phone Issues

Rural Long Distance Call Completion Problems

Recently The Community Agency(TCA) Municipal Utilities has received numerous complaints of incoming long distance issues (including incoming cell phone calls). TCA has learned that other rural Iowa providers are having these same issues; some since 2008. These problems are caused by some long distance service providers using unreliable "least cost routing" methods to deliver calls. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has proposed rules to "ensure a reasonable and nondiscriminatory level of service to rural areas", but this has and will take time to implement. Meanwhile take action: please ask those calling you by long distance with any of the problems listed below to contact "their" local and long distance provider to file a complaint.

Some of the problems reported by TCA customers are the same as those posted on the FCC website:

- Long distance callers hear nothing or "dead air" for 10 seconds or more after they dial your number.
- The call may be dropped or you may hear a busy signal.
- Long distance callers repeatedly hear a recording such as "The number you have dialed is not in service" when they know they've correctly dialed your number.
- After you answer a long distance call, the voice quality is unacceptable: one person cannot hear the other, the sound is choppy, there are awkward transmission delays after speaking, or there is an echo.

Unfortunately, TCA is not allowed to file a complaint with the long distance caller's service providers. Only the long distance caller can file a complaint with their local service and long distance provider.

NOTE: If TCA provides your long distance service and you are experience outgoing long distance call problems, contact TCA so we can resolve your issues.

If you receive a complaint from a long distance calling party that they have had issues calling TCA customers, take action: please inform them that this is an issue with their provider and ask them to file a complaint with their local service and long distance provider. They will need to provide the following information:

- Calling Number
- Called Number
- Date & Time
- Problem that occurred

They may also file a complaint with the FCC about these issues by calling 1-888-225-5322 (options 4,3,3,0 to speak with a live representative), they will need the same information as listed above. More information on this issue is available from the FCC at:

<http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/problems-long-distance-or-wireless-calling-rural-areas>

If you have any questions, please contact TCA – 712-930-5593.

ORIGINATING CALLER



1. Originating caller dials long distance (LD) call
Example: 1-123-456-7890.

LOCAL TELEPHONE SWITCH



2. Call routed to tandem telephone switch.

TANDEM TELEPHONE SWITCH



3. Call routed to caller's assigned LD phone company.

8. Caller may or may not hear a ring back. In some cases the call never connects, in others, the call will eventually be completed with poor quality.



CALLED PARTY
1-123-456-7890

9. If the call never connects, the called party remains unaware that they were called unless notified.

7. The LCR lookups start all over again and the call becomes caught in a loop.

Long Distance Carrier 1

4. Selects the LD carrier with the least cost routing (LCR).

Long Distance Carrier 3

6. Carrier 3 performs a LCR lookup and sends the call back to Carrier 1 unaware they were already part of the call.

Long Distance Carrier 2

5. Selects the carrier with the least cost routing.

<http://www.dailyyonder.com/if-phone-doesnt-ring/2013/03/22/5733>