

Preliminary Report on Internet and Phone Outages in Mendocino County during the week of
August 4, 2014

On Sunday, August 3, 2014, at approximately 5:20 p.m., an aerial fiber-optic cable was severed along the Comptche-Ukiah road in Mendocino County. This road directly connects the town of Mendocino and the City of Ukiah, and is often used by logging trucks. There are still no official reports from the owner of the fiber-optic cable about exactly how it was severed. The result of the damage to this single fiber-optic cable was a loss of almost every type of communication for entire communities situated along the Mendocino County coastline, including the Town of Mendocino and the City of Fort Bragg.

Survey results indicate that many residents were left without internet or communications capabilities for at least 45 hours, if not longer. What is less well-known is that this outage also impacted internet and communications capabilities for the community of Laytonville and the City of Willits. The Broadband Alliance of Mendocino County (BAMC), a not-for-profit volunteer group, immediately put together an online survey and requested residents who were affected by this outage to fill it out once their internet services were functional again.

Survey respondents were asked to indicate exactly which services they lost as a result of the blackout, and were given the opportunity to answer open-ended questions about they were affected. The following is a preliminary report on the more than 700 responses received as of August 23, 2014. It is estimated that this number of survey respondents is a fraction of the total number of residents who were affected. A full incident report will be compiled and delivered by BAMC to the appropriate governmental agencies. Full statistics will also be released to the public and the media once a thorough follow up has been done with survey respondents.

Important notes:

- *All respondents' information will remain anonymous unless explicit permission is given to release personal information.*
- *There has been no follow up with respondents regarding their open-ended responses. This means there is a high probability that all numbers and statistics listed below will increase after follow up is conducted. A full incident report containing the information from this follow up will be compiled.*
- *If you have not completed the survey yet, and were affected by the outages (even if you do not live on the coast), please do so at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/mendocountyoutage>*

Emergency 9-1-1 Call Capability Losses

Out of more than 700 responses to this survey as of August 23, 2014, there were 273 residents whose regular ability to place a 9-1-1 call was cut off, including:

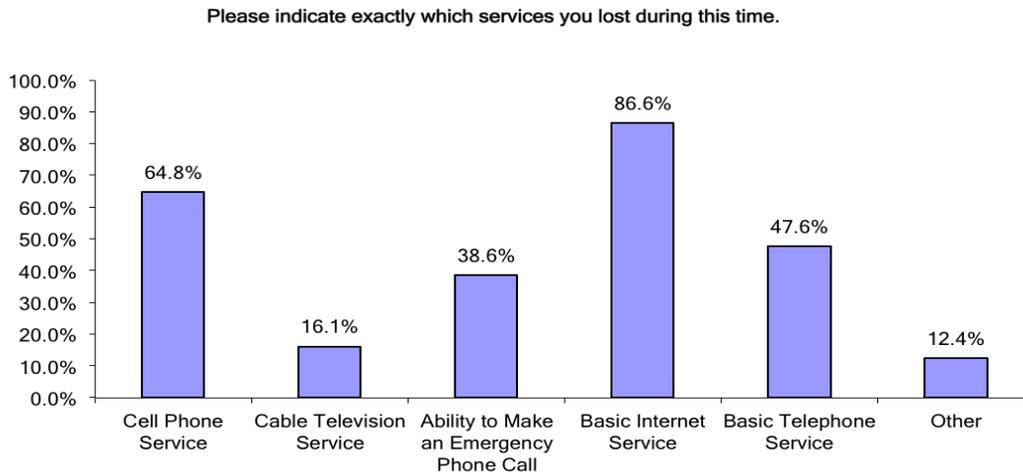
- 3 potentially life-threatening medical emergencies
- 39 disabled or elderly residents
- 45 reports of a safety issue as a result of losing 9-1-1 capabilities
- 11 residents in the outlying areas of Laytonville who were potentially threatened by the Lodge Complex fire and who lost the ability to receive reverse 9-1-1 calls for evacuation warnings or orders

Economic Losses

Initial survey responses reveal economic losses from the outage at \$216,000. This number will rise with further follow-up. We are especially interested in economic losses – if your business was affected, and you have not answered the survey, we would like to hear from you.

Communications Losses

The following is a graphical representation of Question #3, “Please indicate exactly which services you lost during this time”:



Conclusion

The above information is a brief snapshot of the statistics compiled to date. We are requesting every resident who was affected by this outage to fill out this online survey if they have not done so. It can be found at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/mendocountyoutage> .

The purpose of this survey is to prevent this from ever happening again. A loss of communications capabilities puts everyone’s life at risk if they cannot place an emergency 9-1-1 call. What’s more, the Broadband Alliance feels strongly that this occurrence was unnecessary. There are simple ways to ensure a backup method of communication is in place in the event that a fiber-optic line is damaged. It is our hope that this survey galvanizes certain agencies in California, whose responsibility it is to ensure the safety of all state residents, into action to require a backup method of communications to be in place. Finally, we expect the results of this survey will bring awareness to just how interconnected the modern world is and dependent on sufficient broadband speeds.