Rural Call Completion Problems

Nationwide problems have surfaced for calls placed to landline customers located in rural areas. The problems may vary whereby a caller may observe ring but no answer, long periods of dead air followed by a busy signal, gargled sounds, or receive a message stating, “this call cannot be completed as dialed” even if the call was dialed correctly. The receiving party may experience the following: phone ringing but no one on the other end of the phone, gargled sounds, caller ID is inaccurate or not displaying information at all.

The Federal Communications Commission and state regulatory commissions have been investigating these problems. Many consumers mistakenly assume the problems are caused by the local telephone company, but investigations reveal the issue is typically with the caller’s originating long distance carrier. Specifically the cause of these problems appears to be with companies used by the caller’s originating long distance providers to help complete the call. Steps are being taken to address these calling problems including the establishment of monitoring and reporting requirements for originating long distance companies. For more information on the call completion issues, please visit: http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/problems-long-distance-or-wireless-calling-rural-areas

If a problem develops in completing a call to a landline customer located in a rural area then ideally the caller should attempt to resolve the problem. A caller experiencing a calling problem should:

- Capture as many call details as possible such as:
  - Date and time of the call.
  - Telephone numbers of the caller and called party.
  - The name of the long distance or wireless company serving the caller.
  - Details of the failed call (gargled, dead air, etc.).
- Report the problem to your long distance or wireless provider.

For more information or assistance contact Scott Glasgow at the Missouri Public Service Commission at 573-526-9689 scott.glasgow@psc.mo.gov.