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SRT NEWSletter

SRT PARTICIPATES IN LAUNCH OF STATE'S FIRST IMPROVED 911 SERVICES

North Dakota has deployed its first end-to-end Internet Protocol (IP) 911 service in support of the state's transition to Next Generation 911 (NG911). This transition from analog to IP-based connectivity means the system that carries emergency 911 calls will be more capable, faster, and less vulnerable to 911 service interruptions.

The North Dakota Association of Counties (NDACo) contracted with Lumen to provide NG911 for all 911 call centers – known as public safety answering points (PSAPs) – in the state. Dakota Carrier Network (DCN) provides statewide network connectivity between 13 independent telecommunication companies and Lumen.

The NG911 network also requires a telecommunications switch to deliver individual calls to the 911 system and route each call to the appropriate PSAP. SRT Communications is the pilot telecommunications company and assisted with local network design. NDACo, DCN, and SRT collaborated to deliver end-to-end IP 911 calls from SRT subscribers to seven PSAPs.

Traditional 911 services use analog circuits to reach the state's 911 system. NG911 migrates that infrastructure to a flexible, secure broadband infrastructure that can carry a much broader range of communication signals such as text, picture, or video. The IP-based network allows information to flow seamlessly across the 911 system, from the public to first responders and beyond.



"SRT is proud to be part of the first deployment alongside DCN and NDACo. We are committed to public safety and have been integral to delivering critical emergency services to the most remote corners of our service area. The NG911 system leverages the latest technology to ensure 911 is available and reliable," said Shawn Grosz, SRT's Chief Technology Officer.

"The work done on behalf of DCN and piloted by SRT completes modernization work on the final portions of the 911 network still using analog technology," said Jason Horning, Next Generation 9-1-1 Program Manager for NDACo. "We are grateful for their leadership and excited for the public to benefit from the improved reliability and the future opportunities that the new network design provides."

Seth Arndorfer, DCN Chief Executive Officer, added, "911 is a critical service that must work every time. The rollout in SRT territory was flawless and we're already working in other parts of the state, with anticipated statewide completion in third quarter 2024. Then, every North Dakotan – citizens and first responders – can be confident 911 connectivity will be there when they need it."

continued on page 2

WHAT'S INSIDE

SENATOR CRAMER LEGISLATIVE STAFF VISITS SRT PG 2

SRT CARES - COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS PG 3

2024 SRT DIRECTORY COMING SOON PG 4

USDA PROGRAMS ENCOURAGE RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SRT PG 5

OFFICIAL NOTICES PG 6-7

SENATOR CRAMER LEGISLATIVE STAFF VISITS SRT





Mary Silverthorn, Legislative Assistant to U.S. Senator Kevin Cramer, visited SRT in Minot to chat, tour, and dig into the "fiber to the home" process.

Her visit included the opportunity to splice real fiber, a key phase that brings high-speed, reliable internet to each individual customer. Working off mapping records for every location in SRT's territory, SRT splicer technicians connect thousands of pieces of "fiber" – strands of glass that carry internet and phone traffic – along buried routes. The fiber is fused from SRT's central office headquarters to smaller offices throughout our service area and, ultimately, to the customer. By splicing fiber herself, Ms. Silverthorn experienced the precise work involved in connecting each home or business to our state-of-the-art fiber network – one at a time – across vast swaths of north-central North Dakota.

Ms. Silverthorn also toured SRT's downtown office to see the systems required to support and deliver broadband throughout Minot and rural communities spanning thousands of square miles. She met employees from operations, engineering, and IT disciplines and had the opportunity to ask a variety of questions about the fiber network.

"SRT appreciates Senator Cramer's focus on telecommunications and broadband," said Cassidy Hjelmstad, SRT CEO and General Manager. "We are always happy to show visitors how SRT and other telecommunications cooperatives work to bridge the digital divide across North Dakota. Many thanks to Mary for being so generous with her time. We enjoyed her visit!"

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continued from the front page

The faster, more flexible and efficient NG911 system offers benefits to callers and first responders alike. Callers can get help quickly from any device at any time, and first responders can share life-saving information instantly.

NDACo is a non-profit organization that supports counties in a variety of ways, including coordinating the state's migration to NG911.

Dakota Carrier Network, created in 1996, is owned by 13 North Dakota-based independent broadband services providers. Combined, they serve nearly 400 communities and have more than 65,000 miles of fiber optic cable in service. DCN provides technology solutions to customers in business, government, and wholesale. DCN's corporate headquarters is in Fargo, N.D., and its Network Operations Center (NOC) is in Bismarck, N.D. DCN Owner companies are BEK Communications, Consolidated Telcom, Dakota Central Telecom, Dickey Rural Communications, MLGC, North Dakota Telephone, Northwest Communications, Polar Communications, Red River Technologies, RTC Networks, SRT Communications, United Communications, and West River Telephone. www.dakotacarrier.com



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