

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA**

**NEWS RELEASE**

**Monday, May 17, 2010**

**Commissioners Clark, Cramer and Kalk**

**\*\*For Immediate Release\*\***

**Phone 701-328-2400**

**Use of wireless phones continues to increase in North Dakota**

More than 20,000 additional wireless phones were activated in North Dakota in the past year as people continue to cut the cord on landline phones.

It is estimated there are 475,128 wireless phones currently in use in North Dakota, an increase of 20,153 or more than four percent from 2009. Land line phones, which number approximately 297,085, decreased by 5,953 or two percent in 2009. The total number of all phones increased from 758,013 to 772,213 in 2010.

“We are truly in the information age; we must continue to expand our communication networks in North Dakota to ensure education, business, and public services are always improving. The results from this year verify that North Dakotans are more connected now than ever.” said Commissioner Brian Kalk, who holds the Commission’s telecommunications portfolio.

The Public Service Commission (PSC) has limited jurisdiction over wireless companies. The PSC and the Federal Communication Commission have varying degrees of regulatory authority over portions of the telecommunications industry.

“The number of wireless phones continues to increase as more and more people consider them a convenient alternative to the traditional wireline phone,” said Commissioner Tony Clark, “The day has clearly passed where the wireless phone was viewed solely as a luxury item.”

The report also revealed some insights into the competition among wired telecommunications providers.

Competitive Local Exchange Carriers (CLECS) now serves 82,800 lines in the state, which is an increase of 3,541 from last year. Incumbent carriers now serve an estimated 214,285 lines, a decrease of 9,494 from last year.

“These numbers demonstrate the increasingly competitive nature of modern telecommunications services,” said Commissioner Chairman Kevin Cramer. “When technology is allowed and encouraged to develop within the marketplace, the need for government oversight is decreased and consumers are the big winners.”

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