



Control Number: 50664



Item Number: 179

Addendum StartPage: 0



May 5, 2020

Public Utility Commission of Texas
1701 N. Congress Ave.
Austin, Texas 78701

RE: Project No. 50664; *Issues Related to the State of Disaster for Coronavirus Disease 2019*

Commissioners,

In response to a series of questions related to COVID-19 from the Emergency Management Coordinator (“EMC”) of the Public Utility Commission of Texas (“Commission”), I am submitting the attached responses from participating members of the Texas Telephone Association (“TTA”). TTA appreciates the Commission’s leadership throughout the current pandemic and the Commission’s EMC’s recent guidance related to obtaining Personal Protective Equipment (“PPE”) for our industry.

Most member companies report that they have sufficient PPE available; however, some companies report shortages of protective masks. Also, some companies have concerns about availability of sufficient testing.

FCC Chairman Pai’s chief policy advisor tweeted recognition of rural Texas providers and noted that TTA has shown great leadership in helping Texas consumers during the pandemic. TTA’s member companies continue to provide essential telecommunications services to our customers and have recently experienced an unprecedented increase in new service requests during the pandemic. In addition, most of the member companies signed onto the FCC’s Keep America Connected Pledge to waive late fees and not terminate service to residential and small business customers because of their inability to pay due to the pandemic. Originally set to expire in 60 days, the FCC extended the pledge through the end of June and many TTA member companies have already indicated that they plan to participate.

If TTA can further assist the Commission or the Texas telecommunications industry during this time, please contact me at 903-854-1290 or wes@eastex.com.

Sincerely,

Wes Robinson
Chair, TTA Regulatory Committee
Director of Regulatory Affairs, Eastex Telephone
Cooperative, Inc.

Company Name	Number of Employees	B-T-W Testing Minimum No.	B-T-W Testing Desired No.	PPE Availability	Is PPE Critically Low?	Other Major Concerns
Big Bend Telephone Company Inc	55	0	0	Low	No	None
Border to Border Communications, Inc	4	4	4	High	No	None
Brazona Telephone Company	46	23	46	Medium	No	None
Central Texas Telephone Cooperative, Inc	75	0	0	Medium	No	None
Consolidated Communications	420	200	325	Medium	No	Future availability of testing, and sourcing of PPE
Dell Telephone Cooperative, Inc	40	25	40	Medium	Yes	Not at this time.
Eastex Telephone Cooperative, Inc	145	0	0	Low	Yes	Concerned with returning to normal business operations with increases in COVID-19 cases
Electra Telephone Company	4	4	4	High	No	None
Etex Telephone Cooperative, Inc	113	45	113	Medium	No	None
Ganado Telephone Company d/b/a YK Communications	26	6	12	Low	No	None
Guadalupe Valley Telephone Cooperative, Inc	226	100	226	Medium	No	Concerned with access to sanitizing wipes
Hill Country Telephone Cooperative, Inc	115	75	200	Medium	No	None at this time
Lake Livingston Telephone Company	5	5	5	Medium	No	Concerned with interface with public and workload of new service requests
Lipan Telephone Company	10	5	10	Medium	No	None
Muenster Telephone Corporation of Texas d/b/a Nortex Communications	48	0	0	Medium	Yes	We have plenty of gloves but on masks we have to reuse existing supply by applying alcohol
Peoples Telephone Cooperative, Inc.	111	0	111	Low	No	Concerned with availability of testing in the rural environments
Southwest Texas Telephone Company d/b/a Southwest Texas Communications	34	0	0	Medium	No	Need repeat testing for techs who enter customer homes
Tatum Telephone Company	4	4	4	High	No	None
Totecom Communications, LLC	43	0	0	Low	Yes	Cannot get disposable masks - highest PPE concern right now
Valley Telephone Cooperative, Inc	222	60	180	Medium	No	None at this time
West Texas Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc	55	5	10	Low	No	We have had trouble finding masks We have placed orders and asked local residents to make them
Windstream	604	0	604	Medium	No	Concerned with material delays to meet increased customer demand