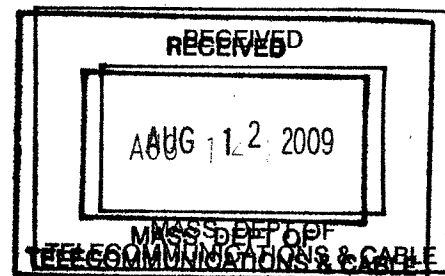


August 10, 2009

Ms. Catrice C. Williams
Secretary of DTC
Two South Station, 4th Floor
Boston, MA 02110



Re: Verizon service in Town of Shutesbury

Dear Ms. Williams,

I would like my comments considered part of the record concerning Verizon phone service provided to residents of Shutesbury.

I have lived in Shutesbury for nearly two years. I see the Verizon phone/DSL crew here on a daily basis. They are friendly and responsive. My comments are in no means meant to be construed against them and the hard work that they do (especially during the Ice Storm 2008). The problem has to be coming from higher up.

Yet, in the past two years, I have had horrible service. The phone issues listed below comprise about 35% of the service received in the past two years.

1. The curse lady. Shortly after arriving here, I went to check on my car which was at the repair shop. The service guy approached me wearily. I learned that he called my home phone number and was cursed at by a woman who told him never to call that number again and hung up. Thinking he dialed incorrectly, he tried again. She again unleashed a string of curse words that he had never heard from a woman before. I assured him that the person he called wasn't me but he wasn't so sure. Several service guys attempted to surreptitiously walk by during our conversation, thinking I was the crass woman.
2. "Shared" phone line. I have shared my phone line with several other West Pelham Road residents on two separate occasions. My phone has lit up to signal an incoming call when they have had an incoming call. I have heard a third conversation while talking with a neighbor.
3. Ghost phone. While sitting at my computer, I have seen my phone register as "in use" when it is not in use. When the phone is 'in use,' I have no dial tone. I then have to use my business phone to call my home phone to 'trigger' a dial tone so I could make a phone call. I had no problem with my DSL service during these times even though it operated off the same line. I requested repair and was told the problem was fixed. Then I saw that my DSL service was slower. When the problem started again, my DSL became faster. I was reluctant to request another repair because I got nowhere. I have replaced the phone line to ensure that it is not a short in the wire, yet I still have this problem several times a month.
4. Phone service or optical illusion? In late March 2009, my husband and I traveled to a wedding in Virginia for several days leaving two of our kids with my mother. The next morning my mother told me that we had no dial tone. We did have DSL service. With no cell phone service in Shutesbury and a child with special needs, I did not want her to be without service. I attempted to register the problem online. Three times the system refused to acknowledge that

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my phone number existed. The fourth time, the online complaint was accepted and we were told that service would be restored on Monday, two days later. Service did come back late Sunday night. I later learned that fiber optics had been installed. We were not given any notice of this installation. Isn't this planned ahead of time?! *What if there was an emergency?*

4a. The following weekend, we experienced another phone outage for more than 24 hours (from Friday night to Sunday morning). I spoke to one of the Verizon workers and he told me that a worker had mistakenly ripped out all the new fiber optics and no one was available to come back until Sunday (hmm, double overtime). Again, we were never given notice.

5. A pattern of problems. This past spring I was performing volunteer work for the Shutesbury School PTO. As part of this work, I called nearly every family with a child at the school. I learned how extensive the phone issues were throughout the town. When I called one family, I heard a clicking noise and then dead air. I learned from the family that they often had no dial tone and used their business line to call out. Another call to a family did not go through because the phone had been disconnected. The family later told me that the phone was in fact 'connected.' A pattern of poor phone service began to emerge. I talked to a number of these families and they too were frustrated but they all thought they were the only ones.

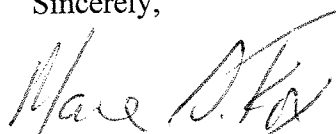
6. Roll of the dice. In the past two years, I have picked up the phone to make a local call only to get a message that the call was long distance. I would hang up and make the same call a few minutes later and it would go through with no problems.

7. Can you hear me now? Last week, I experienced a 'clicking phone line.' I would receive a call and hear a click. I would hear the person on the other line but they could not hear me. I could not receive a call. Eventually, the caller would use my business line to call me. This went on for a day. How would I communicate with the outside world if I didn't have a business line?

My friends who reside throughout the Northeast incredulously wonder, "Where do you live?" Their reaction would be comical if it weren't so frequent.

This is my official letter of protest. Please do something to change this system.

Sincerely,



Mare S. Fox
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Shutesbury, MA 01072
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