

# On Line With...

# Haviland Telephone Company, Inc.

A PUBLICATION OF HAVILAND TELEPHONE COMPANY, INC.

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## Property Taxes

Kansas Utility companies pay a lot of local property taxes. Well, not really. Consumers of utility services pay a lot of property taxes on services utilities provide. We're assessed at the State level, not by the local county assessor. The company is required to file a comprehensive report annually to the Kansas Department of Revenue, including location, original book value, and type of all assets by Township. This report, which is over 50 pages for us, covers all financial data, and many operating details. This kind of asset detail means that companies must track assets by purchase date, location by legal description, and type of asset. Even a small company like Haviland Telephone has assets in nearly 2000 sections in 8 counties! The detail behind the asset reporting runs over 6000 items.

The Department of Revenue looks at the total company situation: total assets, age of assets, ability to generate revenue, change in status from last assessment, and anticipated change. The Department assigns a valuation to the company, against which we're assessed 33%, times the local mil rate levy. This generates a lot of local taxes, much of which goes to the public schools.

Not all communications providers are considered utility companies for property tax purposes. CATV companies, cell phone companies, and VoIP providers are considered commercial companies, and are assessed locally, to the extent they report any local assets. We pay property taxes on cable, switching equipment, vehicles, buildings, furniture, and our intangible ability to generate revenue. In fact, our Long Distance operation pays property taxes with absolutely no assets or property, except our ability to generate revenue. Ouch!

### HAVILAND TELEPHONE COMPANY

104 N. Main, Haviland

620-862-5211 or 800-339-8052

Gene Morris, President

#### Haviland Office

Mark Wade, General Manager

Millie Hannan, Customer Service

Leanna Borst, Customer Service

Sandy Erwin, Billing Coordinator

Kay Lewis, Data Processor

Kristina Steinle, Administrative Assistant

Dwight Smitherman, C. O. Supervisor

Alvin DeGarmo, Construction Supervisor

Bobby Long, Technician

Tommy Bunce, Technician

Sabrina Freeman, Plant Sec.

Steve Davis, Controller

Sue Leppert, Accountant Asst.

#### Conway Springs Office

211 W. Spring

620-456-2211 or 800-287-7905

Dan King, Outside Plant Supervisor

Brent Swingle, Central Office Technician

Vesta Charbonneau, Customer Service

LaDonna Erker, Customer Service

Don Phillips, Technician

Dan Bender, Technician

#### BUSINESS HOURS

8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday-Friday

Office Closed Saturday and Sunday

[www.havilandtelco.com](http://www.havilandtelco.com)

#### For service after hours call:

Haviland Office, 800-339-8052

Conway Springs, 800-287-7905

#### Haviland Internet Help Desk Hours:

Monday thru Friday - 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Sat. 1 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. & Sun. Office Closed

1.866.704.4268

## 2006 Property Taxes by County

Barber	\$32,318
Comanche	\$32,675
Harper	\$3,260
Kingman	\$69,106
Kiowa	\$174,839
Pratt	\$95,661
Sedgwick	\$1,548
Sumner	\$238,855
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$648,262</b>

## Recent Property Taxes

2001	\$286,905
2002	\$296,308
2003	\$327,462
2004	\$411,270
2005	\$604,353
2006	\$648,260

In recent years, the federal government provided rapid acceleration of depreciation of assets, and Kansas has provided income tax credits for recent investments. This helped spur new utility investment.

## Personnel Changes

After more than 7 years with us, Stacey Hosheit is leaving us for better opportunities. Stacey has been a Customer Service Representative, manning the phone, answering customer questions, performing service orders, and doing several administrative and clerical functions. She and her family reside in Greensburg.

After 5 years with us, Kris Steinle is leaving us for better opportunities, having accepted a matrimonial proposal in Nebraska. We presume this is a better opportunity! Kris was retained as the Administrative Assistant to our General Manager. However, she came with prior telephone experience, and quickly garnered additional responsibilities. She and her children will leave at the end of the school year.

Coming to us from our competitive telecom company, Giant Communications, is Leanna Borst. She will assume several customer service responsibilities. However, she will retain her duties related to e-mail and Internet account management. She and her family live in Pratt.

In order to relieve Leanna of her former Internet help desk duties, we are in the process of moving some of that responsibility to another sister company. The 866-702-4268 number will continue to be manned by Giant Comm employees for now. But we hope to expand help desk hours from our current limited hours, to around-the-clock availability. The service will continue to be free to existing Haviland Telephone Internet customers.

We are also adding a Plant Secretary to help minimize the paperwork our technical people must do. Sabrina Freeman comes to us with experience in administrative experience in the medical field, photography and photographic software, and several home businesses. She will have responsibility for purchasing, vendor contacts and negotiating, construction permitting, etc. Her husband, Todd, is a long-time Haviland resident and business man.

Other personnel additions and other changes are also likely during the next few months.

## New and New-ish:

### Video on the Web:

By now you've heard of Youtube, the fantastically successful on-line video web site. According to general press reports, the site is currently seeing over 100 million visitor hits PER DAY! You've also heard that major content owners, including full-length movies' owners, are pursuing legal remedies against them for permitting posting of copyright-protected content.

But there are other video sites currently less well known.

iTunes provides more than just songs. Both commercial and amateur videos are available.

Joost is the current rave. It provides youthful TV-like channels, which are somewhat customize-able. The former "Venice Project" was developed by the Skype IP telephony guys.

Blip.tv is similar to Youtube in basic feel, but includes more material professionally produced (and legally available).

Brightcove.com is a good source of parodies, comedies, and general silliness in video.

Network2.tv presents itself as a "meta" site, a place to help you find video content on the Web. But it also includes video content you won't find elsewhere.

In general, you'll need user accounts to access these sites, even if they are free. And, if you don't have a quick, and at least mildly perverse, sense of humor, perhaps you'd better stick to the news sites.

## Kansas Lifeline:

### Low Income Telephone Assistance

The Kansas Corporation Commission's web site reports that the Federal guidelines for qualifying for this support program are changing. This is the program that provides support for basic telephone service. If you have recently qualified, you probably still qualify, since the minimum qualifying standards have eased.

Remember, you must certify each year that you qualify.

For more information, call Sandy at our Haviland office or see the KCC's web site <http://www.kcc.state.ks.us/pi/lifeline.htm>.

#### **New Federal Guidelines:**

<u>Family Size</u>	<u>Maximum Annual Income</u>
1	\$15,315
2	\$20,535
3	\$25,755
4	\$30,975
5	\$36,195
6	\$41,415
7	\$46,635
8	\$51,855
Additional.....\$ 5,220	

### **Kansas 1-Call**

Don't make your project more expensive than it has to be. Before you dig, call Kansas "D-I-G-S-A-F-E" (800-334-7233). You'll need as much detail about your project as possible. You'll also need to give utility companies at least 2 days lead time. Even if you're just digging post holes, it's a good idea to call. It doesn't cost you anything.