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WIRELESS E911 ADVISORY BOARD SETS GOALS FOR NEXT YEAR

LINCOLN – The Wireless E911 Advisory Board set a goal for the next year that all Nebraska counties will be Phase II capable with a minimum of one wireless carrier.

That was the cornerstone of six goals set by the advisory board which were reported to the Nebraska Public Service Commission at its weekly meeting on April 14.

The others were:

- To complete development of a permanent funding mechanism for 911 call-centers, also known as public safety answering points, for wireless and wireline carriers;
- To revisit reimbursement to public safety answering points;
- Develop a plan on how to accomplish a 2010 deadline for the transfer of wireless calls for those public safety answering points who have failed to deploy enhanced landline 911 services;
- Develop a plan for migration to Next Generation 911, and
- Revisit requests for proposals and approved vendor lists.

Three counties – Gage, Sheridan, and Wayne – are Phase I capable and are waiting for equipment upgrades to move into being Phase II capable. Phase I permits public safety answering points (PSAP) to determine the location of a cellular tower transmitting a call for emergency assistance. Phase II permits PSAPs to locate the caller within approximately 10 meters.

Eleven other counties – Brown, Cherry, Dundy, Franklin, Garden, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keya Paha, Morrill, Richardson, and Webster are either installing equipment to make them E911 capable or are working on the beginning stages of Geographical Information System data which is a precursor to coming into compliance with state law regarding E911 capabilities.

In addition, Pierce County is working on a self-supporting PSAP rather than depending on nearby counties to handle its work.

Seventy-nine of Nebraska's 93 counties are currently Phase II capable, representing 95.6 per cent of the state's population.

Fifth District Commissioner Jerry Vap of McCook, also a member of the E911 advisory committee, said work for the E911 effort will not be completed when all counties are Phase II capable. “The Next Generation of E911 and 911 capability is being pushed out of Washington and will require PSAPs to accept calls from a computer, text messaging, or other similar devices.”

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