

## Service Announcement

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**TO:** WaTech Telephony Customers

**FROM:** Eric Talberg  
Local Telephone Services  
Telecommunications Services Division

**SUBJECT:** WaTech Telephony Services continues to implement up-to-date telephony products

WaTech has been offering Voice-over-IP (VoIP) systems for several years and is actively promoting the installation of VoIP services using WaTech's current Avaya platform.

We have seen a steady increase in VoIP adoption here at WaTech as well as within the industry. There have been improvements to the technology and there are significant benefits associated with moving to VoIP. For example:

- The overall cost of ownership is lower
- The ability to integrate with other systems and technology
- The convergence of computers and telephony on the same network (allowing the sharing of transport & connectivity costs)
- Relocating telephone sets around the office is as simple as unplugging and re-plugging the phone in the new work space
- Telephony applications (known as soft phones) running on computers and/or mobile devices can eliminate the need for separate handsets

This flexible, cost efficient model is the way of the future for telephony services.

WaTech's networks and infrastructure behind the telephone systems have been using VoIP for many years to connect sites and systems together. This technology was effectively leveraged on our PBX network to allow expanded free dialing to most of Washington's population. As this transformation continues, these capabilities will grow.

As VoIP technology continues to evolve, the few remaining manufacturers still providing legacy non-VoIP voice solutions have also focused their research and development on VoIP. At some point in the future, they will choose to stop manufacturing and supporting these legacy solutions altogether. This inevitable path of sun-setting legacy solutions is the natural evolution of technology. Customer needs, expectations, and requirements continue to evolve and outline the need for WaTech to position our services to continue adopting newer, more innovative solutions to support our valued customers.

WaTech will continue working with our customers and business partners to help them better understand the benefits of VoIP. We will also help customers with defining the site requirements to utilize a VoIP system. The chief difference in site requirements between legacy and VoIP systems is the need for customers to provide Power-over-Ethernet (PoE) Local Area Network (LAN) switches. It is also strongly advised that the PoE switches are maintained with backup power to provide continuous service to the phones in the event of power interruptions. VoIP compatible telephone handsets will also need to be purchased for users who require a separate handset.

Watch for another Service Announcement in the near future with an associated timeline for decommissioning legacy services. Our goal is to support existing services for as long as it is reasonable while encouraging and assisting our customer with VoIP systems. This change in how we plan to offer service is in alignment with both the WaTech roadmap



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and our strategic direction. See the WaTech roadmap for more information (<https://watech.sp.wa.gov/ask/roadmap/SitePages/Home.aspx>).

**WaTech contacts:**

If you have additional questions or would like more information, please contact Eric Talberg at 360-407-8736 [eric.talberg@watech.wa.gov](mailto:eric.talberg@watech.wa.gov) or the WaTech Support Center at 360-753-2454 or 888-241-7597 or [Servicedesk@watech.wa.gov](mailto:Servicedesk@watech.wa.gov).