



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Enforcement Bureau
Spectrum Enforcement Division
1270 Fairfield Road
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania 17325-7245

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL - RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

January 9, 2008

Leopoldo Pineda, General Manager
Socorro Electric Cooperative
P.O. Box H
Socorro, NM 87801

RE: WARNING NOTICE: Radio Interference from Power Line Hardware: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Case #EB-2002-297

Dear Mr. Pineda:

On March 17, 2006, we notified Socorro Electric Cooperative (SEC) of harmful radio frequency interference (RFI) from power line hardware in the Datil area to Mr. [REDACTED], a licensee in the Amateur Radio Service. The letter stated that Mr. [REDACTED] reported no improvement in the noise levels at his Datil location, and that we had received no indication of any progress by SEC in correcting this problem since General Manager Leopoldo Pineda's June 24, 2003 letter, which we enclosed.

Mr. [REDACTED] reports that there has been no improvement in the interference levels. Furthermore, we have reviewed the information submitted by Socorro and find it inadequate. SEC's replies indicate that it has not properly used modern techniques in resolving this issue. Professional RFI investigators generally use radio direction finding techniques and signature analysis to quickly and positively locate offending noise sources. The FCC is not asking that all noise sources be corrected, or that all possible areas be "patrolled" for visual and other defects not associated with the harmful interference reported by Mr. [REDACTED]. Only those problems actually causing interference need be addressed by SEC. Most RFI investigations can be concluded in an afternoon, yet this has dragged on for several years without resolution. In fact, a properly conducted RFI investigation using signature analysis should have located most if not all of the noise sources, whether power line related or not.

Regarding the inadequacy of the information submitted by SEC, for example, the contractor and other notarized statements include no dates or details of noise locating equipment or frequencies monitored. A notarized statement provided by Ricky Williams describes only a standard AM receiver, which is not a suitable tool for sufficiently narrowing power line noise. Williams indicates that he did not hear any "noise", but later states that he heard "static." Furthermore, since this case seems to involve multiple sources, it would not be expected that noise heard by a radio would disappear totally when a single defect is repaired. All contributing noise sources must be repaired in order for the noise to disappear or drop to a tolerable level.

Williams describes only a "small hand-held AM/FM radio with an antenna". That type of receiver, and the "AM 1600 radio vehicle patrol" radio also described, is not adequate to narrow noise

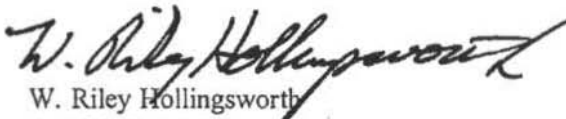
sources. Most professional RFI investigators use VHF or UHF receivers. With proper equipment, there would be no need to have scheduled "maintenance for every pole in every direction" from which Mr. [REDACTED] observes noise. Mr. Lopez stated that Mr. [REDACTED] "handed me some sort of antenna and radio contraption that we could never pick anything off of", leading to the conclusion that he Lopez had no radio direction finding device himself. Finally, Jerry Ray of C.B.R. Service describes performing maintenance in an area as a general "shot gun" approach. Finally, the line running to the west and steeply uphill from Lot 81 has not been addressed. That line was not shown on your maps or charts, but has been cited in previous correspondence.

The equipment required to locate noise such as that of which Mr. [REDACTED] complains is less expensive generally than the cost of two linemen in a bucket truck for two days. Noise sources are easily identified with proper training and equipment. Often the defects causing such noise are precursors of a more serious failure of lines or associated equipment.

Socorro has had more than adequate time to address the noises sources in Mr. [REDACTED] case. **In order to avoid enforcement action in this matter, you are requested to advise this office within 30 days of receipt of this letter as to what actions you have taken in order to identify and eliminate the sources of Mr. [REDACTED] radio interference. You are also requested to update this office every 30 days beginning March 1, 2008 if you anticipate that it will take longer than 30 days to correct the noise sources.**

Please contact me at 717-338-2502 if you have any questions about this matter.

Sincerely,


W. Riley Hollingsworth
Special Counsel

cc: FCC South Central Regional Director
[REDACTED]