



Hello ... INDOT Launches New Phone System

Voice and video communications is improving at INDOT. Starting at central office in April, and then at satellite and district offices, INDOT is standardizing and updating our telephone system to VoIP, pronounced “voyp.” VoIP is short for “voice over Internet protocol,” where phone services are transmitted over an existing digital network.

Migration to this system has many benefits that include:

Cost savings:

- INDOT will break even on the equipment after three years of use, and save approximately \$750,000 over the lifetime of the equipment, expected to be eight years
- Elimination of long-distance fees using five-digit dialing; a study showed that 91 percent of INDOT’s long-distance fees were between INDOT offices
- More efficient tracking of phone lines that are dropped, but still active, reducing costs of lines not being used

New standardized features:

- Built-in camera and high-resolution 5-inch video screen (with option to block live camera)
- One-on-one video conferencing with INDOT employees and other state of Indiana agencies using the VoIP system who have video enabled phones (INDOT is first agency using video); those outside of the state network cannot see you even if they have a VoIP video phone
- Audio conference with up to six people on and off the state network
- Caller ID
- High-quality sound and speaker phone
- Voice mail with light indicating a new voice mail is available
- Call hold, divert (don’t answer-send to voice mail), call waiting, interoffice transfers
- Agency phone book on your computer screen
- Instant messaging (IM)
- Desk phone can be forwarded to any other phone including your cell phone
- Phone will go with you if you relocate within the same building— no downtime or scheduling for new phone
- Optional headset or webcam in lieu of desk phone; optional hearing-aid compatible handset





Central Office Management Information Systems employees Steve Swinford, Bill Carlisle and Peri Myers have performed preliminary work and are rolling out the new system.

“Many of the agency’s satellite office phone systems are between 15 and 20 years old,” said Swinford. “It was time for the replacement of systems and we were eager for new technology. We’d looked at VoIP phone and phone system upgrades a few years ago, and it was cost-prohibitive. The Indiana Office of Technology has-VoIP already in place, so they and other agencies — not INDOT — have absorbed the initial cost of the new system.”

Carlisle added, “In addition to the system cost savings, if employees use the IM feature instead of email, we will likely see significant savings on email storage costs.”

With the new system, Swinford said, “The only issue may be getting used to all the new features and functions.”

Employees will receive one-hour training on the new system, followed by a question-and-answer session. When training is completed, they will leave with their new phones.

Employee Development will be videotaping a new system training session in May. The video will serve as a training tool for new employees, as well as a resource and refresher course for current employees.

What will INDOT do with approximately 1,600 old phones? INDOT’s Disposition Agent, Connie Shearer, has contacted the Indiana Department of Administration to post the sale of the old phones on the Internet through an authorized site for state government. Shearer and others are hopeful that through the sale of the phones, we can offset the cost of the new system.