

Wainwright Fone Ties Into DEW Line

The 357 residents of the village of Wainwright received long distance and local communications services with the installation of a bush telephone by RCA Alaska Communications, Inc., on September 30.

Telephone service has been established by RCA Alascom in this Eskimo village located on the Arctic Ocean through a VHF radio channel that connects with a rural radio station installed at the nearby Wainwright DEW (Distant Early Warning) Line Site.

Telephone traffic is then routed from the Wainwright DEW site over a DEW radio channel to the General Telephone Company in Barrow.

This is the first time that RCA Alascom has been able to route commercial telephone traffic over the Air Force-owned DEW Line.

The telephone in Wainwright is designed as a foreign exchange and has been equipped with one circuit initially. In a foreign exchange, the telephone is part of a telephone exchange system, but it is not located within the physical boundaries of that exchange area.

Wainwright can thus obtain local calling service from the local telephone company in Barrow located 100 miles away.

Installed in the Wainwright city office building, the telephone is an attended village telephone under RCA Alascom's bush communications program.

RCA Alascom through its bush program now maintains and operates 70 village telephones throughout rural Alaska.

The telephone number for Wainwright is 852-6355.