

Pay Phone facts & figures

Why Payphones Matter

(NAPSA)—Here's a ringing endorsement: experts on technology point out that payphones provide convenience, reliability, affordability and a lifeline for families and communities unmatched by other telecommunication products. When you're away from home or the office and reliability is important, the device you can count on for sure is the payphone.

Unfortunately, payphones are being disconnected. Over the past few years; 400,000 public pay telephones have been removed across the country and many private payphone providers have been forced out of business. While some of the 2.2 million payphones are disappearing from metropolitan areas, many of those being removed are in low-income and rural areas where they often play a critical role in providing access to social services.

Some basic facts:

- Approximately 5.5 million American households do not have residential phone service according to the Federal Communications Commission's *Telephone Subscribership Report*.

- Older Americans and others in low-income households are much less likely to have home phones than those with higher incomes. Of households with annual incomes under \$5,000, nearly 20 percent were without home phone service as of November 2000. In contrast, 98.3 percent of households with annual incomes of \$60,000 or more had home phone service.

- Minorities and the urban poor are more likely to be without a phone in their homes. An esti-



With a payphone, the battery never dies, the call won't be dropped and the signal is always clear.

ated 25 percent of urban poor households and about 30 percent of African American households with annual incomes under \$5,000 do not have a home phone.

- Roughly one in four poor Americans living in rural areas (about 23 percent) lack basic home telephone service.

- Many Americans now use wireless phones for convenience and emergencies, but 86 percent of rural households and 92.2 percent of poor households nationwide do not own a cellular phone.

- Results from an industry survey on independent pay telephones disconnected in nine states between January 1998 and July 2000 showed that areas with high minority population concentration experienced a much greater percentage of disconnected payphones than did the rest of their state.

For more information on the valuable role payphones continue to have in American life, you can visit the American Public Communications Council, Inc. (APCC) Web site at www.apcc.net or call at 1-800-868-2722.