

N.W.T. 911 lawsuit against Bell Mobility may grow

[CBC News](#)

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A class-action lawsuit that accuses Bell Mobility of charging users for non-existent 911 service in the Northwest Territories could expand to include customers in Nunavut and Yukon.



The lawsuit by James Anderson claims that Bell Mobility should not have charged him and other N.W.T. customers a 911 fee for a service that does not exist in the territory. (CBC)

Lawyers behind James and Samuel Anderson's lawsuit asked the N.W.T. Supreme Court on Tuesday to expand the suit to include approximately 4,000 Bell Mobility customers in Nunavut and 1,500 customers in rural Yukon communities.

Bell Mobility is the largest cellular carrier in the Northwest Territories, with about 20,000 customers.

However, there is no 911 emergency operator service in the N.W.T. Residents must instead dial a seven-digit local phone number for immediate fire, medical or RCMP assistance in their communities.

James Anderson, a Yellowknife resident, and his son Samuel want Bell Mobility to pay back the 75-cent monthly fee it has charged to them and other customers for 911 service that is not available in their areas.

James Anderson filed the lawsuit in 2007. It was certified as a class action last year.

Only Whitehorse has 911 service

In Canada's northern territories, only the Yukon capital city of Whitehorse has 911 service. It does not exist in Yukon communities outside the city, nor does it exist anywhere in Nunavut.

Bell Mobility has argued that it never agreed to provide 911 service. The company has said there was no mention of providing the emergency service in its contract with cellphone customers.

The carrier is also opposing the Andersons' motion to expand the lawsuit to include Yukon and Nunavut customers, arguing that the class action should be restricted to customers in the Northwest Territories only.

But Keith Landy and Sam Marr, two Toronto-based lawyers who are representing the Andersons, told the court by video conference that the dollar amounts involved are so small — about \$9 per year for each customer — that the only way Nunavut and rural Yukon customers could sue Bell Mobility would be by joining the N.W.T. lawsuit.

During Tuesday's court hearing, the Andersons' lawyers and Bell Mobility argued about how customers should be notified about the lawsuit, and which side should pay the costs associated with that notification process.

Among other things, both sides also disagreed on whether the trial should be held before a judge and jury, which the Andersons' lawyers want, or before a judge alone, which Bell Mobility wants.

The judge hearing the case said he will issue a written ruling as soon as he can on all the issues brought up at Tuesday's hearing.

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Arctic Shonya

2011/05/05
at 10:31 AM ET

For those of you with Bell accounts that are not paying for FULL packages, check your bill for a Call Forwarding charge. Bell is billing Call Forwarding to most of their NWT customers due to a "system error" even if you have never call forwarded, ever. Please check your bill, as you have a right to dispute this charge. I called today, May 5, and they refunded me for the 5th time since October 2010. Once again, it's been called a "system error", and once again, they have not fixed it. They are probably raking in thousands of dollars off unknowing customers. Along with their 911 charges!

Rating

4

4



0



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wtcc86

2011/05/04
at 12:02 PM ET

more legislation is needed to govern how corporations operate; and since they are a person under the law they should pay the same percentage income taxes as a single person - according to their earning scale.

Rating

3

6



3



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WhyKay

2011/05/04
at 9:47 AM ET

It's not the \$9 a month, it's the principle of the matter. Why does a huge corporation like Bell insist on receiving donations?? That money would be much better spent on a DESERVING charity.

"Bell Mobility has argued that it never agreed to provide 911 service", no, they just charge for a non-existent service.

The CRTC needs a HUGE overhaul, and needs to work for the people, not the corporations.

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33

34



1



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Arctic Dude

2011/05/04
at 8:04 AM ET

Rating
36

37 1

Where can I buy a legal licence to steal from people? That would be so cool.

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burninman

2011/05/03
at 7:01 PM ET

Rating
127

128 1

The fact that a telecom company in Canada can charge you for a service it has no intention of providing and, with a straight face, argue it's OK because you signed a contract allowing them to do it, says a lot about who the CRTC works for.

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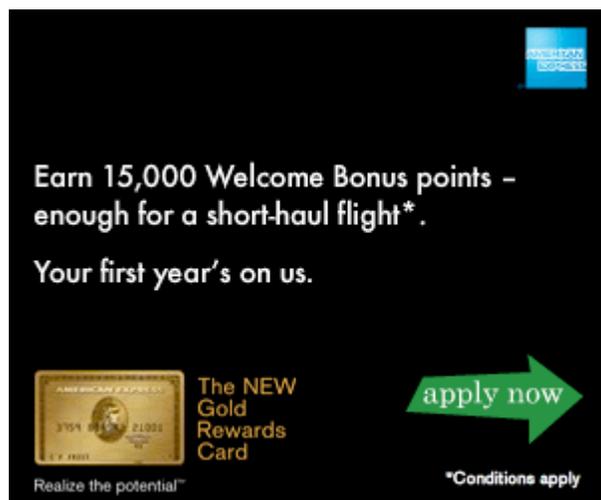
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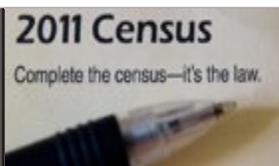
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