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ShoreWaves to Wind Down Operations; Founder Retiring After 14 Years Serving the Copper Country

Fixed wireless Internet and telephone provider will complete an orderly shutdown by Labor Day; customers urged to secure new service

HOUGHTON, Mich. — July 15th, 2026 — ShoreWaves, a fixed wireless Internet and telephone provider serving Michigan's Copper Country, announced today that it will cease operations and wind down customer service, following the retirement of founder Steve Fitzgerald.

Founded in 2012, ShoreWaves grew out of a personal need to work remotely and a broader effort to bring Internet access to communities in the Upper Peninsula that otherwise had none. Over 14 years, the company expanded service across the region and developed proprietary equipment to reach customers that larger providers could not.

Fitzgerald had spent more than two years working with associates to sell the business in order to retire. After repeated attempts to sell the company's assets were unsuccessful, ShoreWaves made the decision to cease operations rather than continue searching for a buyer.

“I started the business in 2012 so that I could work at my other businesses from home, and so that others in the community could likewise obtain Internet service where there was none,” said Steve Fitzgerald, founder of ShoreWaves. “We succeeded and grew over the past 14 years. I have been attempting, with the help of friends and associates, to sell the business for over two years so that I can retire. We came very close to a sale but failed, and now the time has come to just end operations and retire while I can still enjoy whatever years I have left.”

An Orderly Shutdown

The ShoreWaves team is remaining together through the transition to ensure customers are not left without service and no equipment is abandoned in the field. Key dates and details:

- **Service continuation:** Internet and telephone service will remain available through the end of July 2026, or until a customer cancels.
- **Billing:** Customers will continue to be billed until they cancel or service ends.
- **Equipment retrieval:** ShoreWaves will schedule no-cost pickup of its outdoor and indoor equipment at each customer's home; equipment should not be returned to ShoreWaves directly. All retrievals will be completed before the Labor Day holiday.

- **Refunds:** Any remaining account credit balance will be refunded via the customer's original payment method once equipment is returned.
- **Retail location:** The ShoreWaves store at the Copper Country Mall will close in mid-July, though phone and email support will continue.
- **Mailing address:** ShoreWaves' P.O. Box 293 in Houghton will remain active through December to handle late payments and regulatory wind-down.
- **New customers:** Customers whose service was installed on or after August 1, 2025 will receive a 50% refund of installation charges; those installed on or after February 1, 2026 will receive a full refund.

Guidance for Customers

ShoreWaves is not endorsing a specific replacement provider but is encouraging customers to evaluate available options in their area, including fiber where it exists, and to ask prospective providers about the level of technical support offered, including phone support and on-premises repair.

Customers with ShoreWaves telephone service will need to select a new provider and can transfer their existing phone number; ShoreWaves does not require a transfer code. In the region, Michigan Broadband Systems (MichiganBBS) has taken over the former AT&T landline network and is rehabilitating existing infrastructure, and Baraga Telephone also offers landline service in parts of the ShoreWaves service area. Business customers with a ShoreWaves phone system will be contacted directly to discuss options.

For Internet service, alternatives available in the region include Starlink, Baraga Telephone, Pasty.net, Spectrum, AT&T, and Verizon. In some areas without cellular service or access to other providers, and without a clearing suitable for Starlink, geostationary satellite providers such as Hughes Satellite may be an option.

What Comes Next

Fitzgerald, who has lived in the Copper Country since 1998, said he plans to remain in the community and become more involved locally, while also traveling more once free of day-to-day business responsibilities.

Customers with questions can reach ShoreWaves by phone at (906) 523-9370 or by email info@shorewaves.net.

About ShoreWaves

ShoreWaves has provided fixed wireless Internet and telephone service to customers across Michigan's Upper Peninsula since 2012, focusing on rural areas underserved by larger providers.

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