

10 December, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

I am responsible for the sound system in our medium sized church in Placitas, New Mexico. In 2003 a member of our church made a donation for the acquisition of an ALS (Assistive Listening System) transmitter and four receivers. This system requires the use of earphones or a neck loop if the user's hearing aid has telecoil capability. At that time it was decided not to pursue the installation of a loop system in the auditorium due to fear of damaging the walls or floor of the building and possible visual impact of the installation.

In 2014, at the advice of Stephen Frazier and others of the Hearing Loss Association another attempt was made to install a loop system. This time it was determined that a loop placed at the ceiling of the auditorium would function well although slightly more power would be required than that for a loop closer to head or hearing aid level. Installation at the ceiling level resulted in almost no visual impact in the auditorium. This system has been highly praised by numerous people who have hearing aids with telecoil capability. People who did not wish to use the older system which required the use of a receiver are now able to hear the services very well without background noise or other problems or having to pick up a receiver before each service, meeting, or concert.

After the installation of the loop system, several hearing aid users said they did not know if it would work with their hearing aids or, if it did, they did not know how to turn on the telecoil. This is surprising to me since the telecoil makes the use of a telephone much easier and since the telecoil should be a selling point for those purchasing hearing aids. For those who knew how to use it, the telecoil was certainly advantageous. It is not only useful during the regular Sunday morning services but also during the many community meetings held at the church and during the Placitas Artist Series concerts held nine times each year.

I believe there is a need for New Mexico to follow the lead of Utah, Arizona, New York, Florida and Rhode Island in mandating that counseling on telecoil technology that works with ADA mandated assistive listening systems be included in the statutory scope of practice for audiologists and hearing aid dispensers in New Mexico.



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