CERTIFIED MAIL-RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

June 11, 2013

(Name withheld)
(Address withheld)
Springfield, Oregon 97477

RE: Radio frequency interference
EB-FIELDNER-13-00009206

Dear Ms. (name withheld):

The Federal Communications Commission has received a complaint that a device, possibly a bad doorbell transformer, may be causing harmful radio interference to an operator in the Amateur Radio Service. The source of this interference has been traced to a property owned by (name withheld). More specifically, this property is located at (address withheld) Street, Springfield, OR 97478. This interference has been reported by a licensed operator in the Amateur Radio Service. The complainant is:

(Name withheld)
(Address withheld)
(Address withheld)
Tel: (Number withheld)

The Commission has the responsibility to require that such problems be rectified within a reasonable time if the interference is caused by faulty consumer equipment. Under FCC rules, such equipment is typically classified as an "incidental radiator. These devices do not intentionally generate radio-frequency energy as part of their normal intended operation. They can, however, create such energy as an incidental part of their intended operation. Common examples are aquarium heaters, certain portable telephones, alarm control panels, fluorescent light ballasts, doorbell control circuits and so forth. Under RFF rules, however, such devices must not cause harmful interference to a radio service. If and when interference does occur, the burden falls on the device operator to correct it, and if necessary, cease operation of the device, whenever such interference occurs. In some cases, the device can be defective resulting in a potential shock or fire hazard.

To help you better understand your responsibilities under FCC rules, here are the most important rules relating to radio interference caused by incidental and unintentional radiators:

Title 47, CFR Section 15.5 General conditions of operation.

(b) Operation of an intentional, unintentional, or incidental radiator is subject to the conditions that no harmful interference is caused and that interference must be accepted that may be caused by the operation of an authorized radio station, by another intentional or unintentional radiator, by industrial, scientific and medical (ISM) equipment, or by an incidental radiator.

(c) The operator of the radio frequency device shall be required to cease operating the device upon notification by a Commission representative that the device is causing harmful interference. Operation shall not resume until the condition causing the harmful interference has been corrected.

Title 47, CFR Section 15.15 General technical requirements.

(c) Parties responsible for equipment compliance should note that the limits specified in this part will not prevent harmful interference under all circumstances. Since the operators of Part 15 devices are required to cease operation should harmful interference occur to authorized users of the radio frequency spectrum, the parties responsible for equipment compliance are encouraged to employ the minimum field strength necessary for communications, to provide greater attenuation of unwanted emissions than required by these regulations, and to advise the user as to how to resolve harmful interference problems (for example, see Sec. 15.105(b)).

The complainant has attempted unsuccessfully to resolve this problem and as a result the matter has been referred to our office. The Commission prefers that those responsible for the proper operation of equipment assume their responsibilities fairly. This means that you should resolve the interference caused by the device and make necessary corrections within a reasonable time.

While the Commission has confidence that most people are able to resolve these issues voluntarily, the Commission wants to make you aware that this unresolved problem may be a violation of FCC rules and could result in a monetary forfeiture (fine) for each occurrence. At this stage, the Commission encourages the parties to resolve this problem without Commission intervention; but if necessary to facilitate resolution, the Commission may investigate possible rules violations and address appropriate remedies.

Please advise this office and (name withheld) as to what steps you are taking to correct this reported interference problem. Please direct any correspondence to this address: 1270 Fairfield Road, Gettysburg, PA 17325. The Commission expects that most cases can be resolved within 30 days of the time they are first reported. Please feel free to call me at 717-338-2577 if you have any questions about this matter.

Sincerely,

Laura L. Smith, Esq.
Special Counsel
Enforcement Bureau

cc: Portland Resident Agent
Western Regional Director