



Wamboldt-Waterfield/John Ulan

CHECKING IT OUT — Clyde Farquhar, of Halifax, is one of several Nova Scotian paraplegics who now have cellular telephones in their cars thanks to a Canadian Paraplegic Association program. The phones are free for qualifying paraplegics, who apply through the CPA.

← 2891 Doug
Smith Dr.
HFX.

Project supplies N.S. paraplegics with free cellular phones in cars

By Brian Medel
STAFF REPORTER

The scenario is familiar. A paraplegic driving his own car suddenly blows a tire, or worse, is involved in a collision but cannot leave the vehicle.

Most disabled drivers agree a car telephone would be a life-saver in such a situation. Now that's becoming a reality right across Canada.

Free cellular telephones have been installed in cars driven by paraplegics over the past few weeks as part of a two-year project by the Canadian Paraplegic Association. Eight of the units have been installed in Nova Scotia.

John Rogers, executive director of the CPA's Nova Scotia division, said the push for car phones came after a tragic death in the mid-1980s.

In the incident, an employee of the CPA's head office in Toronto was involved in a motor vehicle accident. Her car left the road and remained out of sight. She was not severely injured, but eventually froze to death when her car ran out of gas, said Mr. Rogers.

That senseless death may have been prevented had a telephone been in the car, he said.

Since then, the CPA, in conjunction with telephone companies across Canada, has successfully arranged for qualifying applicants to receive free cellular car phones.

In Nova Scotia, three more phones have been approved by the CPA and will be installed by a Dartmouth firm, Mobile One Cellular Telephones Ltd. The cellular phones are made by Novatel Communications Ltd., of Calgary.

In this province, cellular phone service is available from Halifax to Truro and Amherst, west to Kentville through the Annapolis Valley and to Chester along the South Shore and along the Eastern Shore.

The various telephone companies taking part in the program offer the service to CPA-recommended clients and throw in some perks of their own.

In Nova Scotia, MT&T has been waiving the \$40 activation charge, the monthly \$9.95 access charge and provides 100 free minutes of air time each month, worth an additional \$55.

"Our role is to help people get rolling," said Peter Rochman, manager of public affairs for MT&T.

The company provides for the installation of the units, worth about \$175 per vehicle.