

Barnard Town Report ECFiber

Barnard is a member of the East Central Vermont Telecommunications District, Vermont's first Communications Union District. The District, formed on January 1, 2016, and operating under the name ECFiber, replaces the 24 town inter-local contract that Barnard approved at Town Meeting in 2008. The District is owned by its 24 member towns, and, as was true under the former inter-local contract, local taxpayer funds cannot be used to subsidize the District's operations. The District must be self-sustaining; there is no recourse to taxpayers.

On April 15, 2016, ECFiber announced that it had completed a \$9 million offering of Series 2016A Bonds. This capital will be used to refinance a portion of its debt, cover 2016 capital expenditures, and complete the design, and make ready, for 250 miles of network construction in 2017. As of December 1, 2016, 326 miles of fiber-optic network have been built and “lit” in parts of 18 member towns.

ECFiber currently serves about 1550 customers, including 287 in Barnard, and plans to raise more capital through the municipal bond market in 2017, 2018 and 2019. These new bonds will allow ECFiber to complete 1400 miles of network, covering all underserved locations in its 24 towns by 2019. Barnard is one of the six towns selected for construction in 2017, with plans to extend the network to every premise served by utility poles within the town.

ECFiber is pleased to offer:

- Reliable and symmetrical high speed Internet access. The upload and download speeds are the same, and the connection speed does not vary inside the ECFiber network. ECFiber strives to always provide the rated speed that the customer is paying for.
- Simple, stable pricing with no contracts, fine print, or data caps. Over the last two years ECFiber has increased its speeds, but not its prices. In 2016 ECFiber raised the service tiers to 10/25/100/500 Mbps without raising the tier prices.
- Local and personable customer service. Phones are answered by an employee during business hours without an automated queue.
- Local ownership and control, as governing board members meet monthly to set policy and are actively involved in promoting ECFiber within the community.
- Valued community services. For example, ECFiber offers over 25 community anchor institutions (schools, town facilities, and libraries) its highest level of service for its lowest monthly fee.

For additional information, call the ECFiber office at 763-2262, email them at support@ecfiber.net, or visit their website at www.ecfiber.net. You can also contact your Barnard Representatives by email at barnard@ecfiber.net.