

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ECFiber Upgrades All Customers; Introduces Fastest Internet Speeds in Upper Valley

By Stan Williams, ECFiber CEO

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Royalton VT – The East Central Vermont Community Fiber Optic Network (“ECFiber”) today announced dramatic increases in the Internet speeds it provides to its customers. ECFiber subscribers currently using 5, 10 or 20 Mbps symmetrical connections will be automatically upgraded to 7, 20 or 50 Mbps, respectively at no additional charge. “This speed increase will help our subscribers handle the increasing bandwidth load being created by richer Internet content and by multiple devices in each home,” said Stan Williams, CEO.

Even Faster Options – Two additional service levels are now available from ECFiber, at symmetrical speeds of 100 Mbps and 400 Mbps. By way of comparison, the fastest widely advertised connection speed in the Upper Valley is “up to” 105 Mbps (downstream only). “Our thinner-than-a-human-hair fiber optic strands now connect over 700 residences, businesses and non-profits in east central Vermont, but we’re just beginning to tap their full potential,” commented ECFiber chair Irv Thomae. “In the future, our network will be able to operate orders of magnitude faster with relatively minor upgrades to our electronics. We expect to offer gigabit speeds (i.e., 1000 Mbps) in the relatively near future, especially if we can leverage some of the funds allocated for Rural Gigabit Network Pilot Projects in a 2014 Farm Bill provision that was sponsored by US Senator Patrick Leahy.”

ECFiber’s growth has been greatly assisted by an open-access fiber optic project built and managed by the Vermont Telecommunications Authority (VTA), called the Orange County Fiber Connector (OCFC). Leasing fiber strands from the VTA has made it possible both to serve ECFiber subscribers directly on the Connector route and to easily extend our fiber down nearby side roads. The VTA has also awarded ECFiber last-mile grants to ensure that addresses in several towns, which were found to have no other broadband solution in place, will have access to the benefits of high-speed Internet service. In addition, thanks to ECFiber’s growing subscriber base and the VTA’s OCFC, ECFiber can now physically connect most of its hubs, thereby achieving economies of scale in buying bandwidth.

Full Speed, Full Time: ECFiber Bandwidth is True and Symmetrical – ECFiber offers true, fully symmetrical data transport and is committed to delivering the actual speeds for which people subscribe. “Our all-fiber network allows us to do this,” commented Thomae. “When buying butter at a supermarket, you expect a pound of butter, not a box labeled ‘up to 16 oz.’ The same should apply to buying broadband speeds.”

Most Internet providers offer their headlined speeds in only one direction – downstream – while delivering upstream speeds that are as little as one fourth of download speeds. ECFiber’s all-fiber network consistently delivers the same speed in both directions, a real plus for anyone uploading content to the Internet or using two-way videoconferencing.

Buy Local! - ECFiber is community-owned and subscriber-funded and is a proud, new member of the Local First Alliance. Most subscriber revenue stays in the local community, paying interest and principal to local investors and providing good jobs to Vermonters.

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ECFiber is a consortium of 24 towns in East-Central Vermont. Step by step, we are building a community-owned fiber-optic network to deliver high-speed Internet to every home, business, or civic institution in our territory. www.ecfiber.net

The Vermont Telecommunications Authority's (VTA) mission is to support broadband and cellular service expansion in unserved areas of Vermont. It does that by building infrastructure and by making grants to telecommunications companies. The VTA's fiber optic routes are open to any provider wishing to lease fiber strands for use within their own networks. www.telecomvt.org

Local First Alliance engages businesses, organizations, and citizens to strengthen the local economy and increase community and environmental stewardship. www.vitalcommunities.org/localfirst/
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