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## GOOD NEWS ABOUT BROADBAND INTERNET!

January 7, 2021

**To: Municipal Officials**

**From: NH Broadband LLC, a subsidiary of NHEC**

High speed fiber-to-the-home Internet service is coming to your town. New Hampshire Electric Cooperative (NHEC) is working to ensure that all its members and communities have access to the high-speed Internet service they need. NHEC has made exciting and important decisions that positively affect your town. Recently, NHEC completed its initial fiber-to-the-home networks to serve portions of the towns of Lempster, Colebrook, Stewartstown, and Clarksville. These networks are just the first steps towards the construction of a new state-of-the-art fiber optic network capable of serving all NHEC members who have an unacceptable level of Internet service. NHEC has also won Federal Communications Commission (FCC) grants to provide fiber-to-the-home internet service to 71 census block groups. These census block groups cover nearly half of New Hampshire's geographic area and the majority of towns served by NHEC. You are receiving this announcement because one or more of the census block groups NHEC has won a grant for is located in your town.

**No Bonding, No Cost to Towns** It is important for select boards and broadband committees to know that unlike some potential providers, NHEC will not require towns to issue any bonds, sign any complex multi-year contracts, or make any municipal payments for NHEC to serve its residents with low-cost high-speed

Internet. Moreover, NHEC will give priority to your public service facilities, town halls, fire stations, schools, etc. and provide free community Wi-Fi where practicable.

**NHEC's Current Internet System** In just five months, NHEC has designed and constructed two all fiber optic networks, which are currently providing high speed Internet to NHEC members in four of the 117 towns that we serve. These networks were supported by funding received from the Connecting New Hampshire Emergency Broadband Expansion Program. NHEC is currently expanding these new networks to serve additional members. Please review this [diagram](#) showing the system, which NHEC will also be providing to your town.

**NHEC's Service Area** This [map](#) shows towns with NHEC's electric customers. NHEC will be utilizing the electric system to extend fiber Internet service to your town. This is the fastest and most economical way for NHEC's broadband subsidiary, NH Broadband LLC, to provide high speed Internet access to the communities we serve.

**FCC Grant Obligations** The areas NHEC is obligated to serve, including non-members, are shown on this [FCC map of winning bids in their recent grant auction](#) (enter the name of your town in the search box to see which areas of your town are covered: [www.fcc.gov/reports-research/maps/rdof-phase-i-dec-2020/](http://www.fcc.gov/reports-research/maps/rdof-phase-i-dec-2020/)).

**Timing** With its Connecting New Hampshire Emergency Broadband Expansion Program projects complete, NHEC has already begun planning our fiber network to reach the remaining underserved members in New Hampshire. NHEC has started a multi-year construction effort and will break ground in the spring of 2021. NHEC's first priority will be to provide service to our members and those areas we are required to serve as a result of the FCC's recent grant auction. NHEC will also be seeking additional state and federal grants to speed implementation of the entire system and provide the lowest rates possible to our members. Federal regulations prohibit NHEC from discussing the specific "timing or order of service" until January 30, 2021. However, we expect to know the timing of providing service to specific geographic areas in the second quarter of 2021. You can keep up to date on NHEC's plans by periodically viewing NHEC's broadband web page, [www.nhec.com/broadband](http://www.nhec.com/broadband) and filling in the form to request future updates.

**Why is NHEC Providing Broadband Internet?** NHEC has been examining the need for better Internet services to its members for some time. NHEC's members have increasingly expressed their frustration with the absence or inadequacy of current commercial alternatives. The viral epidemic has put an exclamation point on the importance of broadband Internet for education, business, medicine, and social connections in our communities. As a result, the NHEC Board of Directors resolved to provide a state-of-the-art fiber optic system to members that would be a resilient and valuable resource for decades to come. For your review, here is the link to the [NHEC October 27, 2020 resolution](#) explaining why NHEC decided to become a leader in providing broadband internet to our members and the communities we serve.

**How Can Your Town Help?** NHEC and its broadband subsidiary are actively seeking additional state and federal grants to increase the speed of construction and reduce the cost of Internet access to our members and your residents. You may be able to help by adding your voice on the needs of your community for broadband services. Moreover, NHEC may ask your help with legislative measures that will make the building of the fiber Internet system quicker and more cost-effective. As we know more about legislative proposals and ways to work together, we will keep you informed via updates at [www.nhec.com/broadband](http://www.nhec.com/broadband).

On behalf of everyone at NHEC, and our subsidiary NH Broadband, thank you for your support. We realize that for many Granite-staters, broadband Internet access is just as important as food, water, and energy--that broadband is essential for communications and transforms how we live, educate, work, and play. We are honored to be working in partnership with you in advancing community livelihoods, resiliency, and sustainability—and request that you please distribute this letter to the appropriate town organizations.

New Hampshire Broadband, LLC

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