

The Basics of CDEC's Internet Service

What is our co-op broadband project? Over the years, CDEC has identified a growing need to update its electric distribution system. The best update is through high-speed internet communications. This will allow CDEC to implement Supervisory Control And Data Acquisition (SCADA). SCADA is a digital energy management system used to monitor, control and optimize the performance of electrical distribution systems. It will allow CDEC to provide safe and reliable electricity to its members more efficiently. SCADA is enhanced through high-speed communications and specialized equipment strategically placed on power poles and in substations.

How will our members benefit? SCADA will make CDEC's electric system more reliable. We will be able to monitor voltage and power quality in real time and quickly troubleshoot and make repairs, reducing the length of outages and making power to homes and businesses overall more reliable.

What about residential and commercial internet use? A few years ago, our members asked us to investigate the option of providing high-speed internet to our service area. We surveyed the members in 2014 and learned there was a huge need across our territory for high-speed internet. In 2016, our membership voted to pass a bylaw amendment that would allow CDEC to offer broadband services. Since then, we have been working with contractors and other electric co-ops who have successfully launched broadband services.

What is fiber service? Fiber is known as being "future-proof," meaning what we install today will be able to handle increasing data loads as the need for speed grows. Fiber technology makes it possible to deliver speeds much faster than what the average home or business currently receives. Fiber is more reliable than other types of internet service and less prone to interference and complications from natural elements.

What makes our service unique? We will offer true broadband internet service, as defined by the Federal Communication Commission. In 2015, the FCC changed its definition of broadband. Under the new definition, services must be at least 25 megabytes per second (Mbps) down with a minimum upload speed of 3 Mbps. CDEC is going to exceed the FCC definition, making us the fastest internet available to residents in Cibola County!

How much will service cost? Residential pricing starts at \$49.95, per month for 50 Mbps up/down. Commercial pricing starts at \$99.95. This will be for "best effort" service, meaning speeds are around, or up to the advertised speeds. In addition, CDEC is capable of providing guaranteed speeds to some of our larger business customers who require this level of service.

Who can subscribe to our fiber service when it's available? We are currently constructing the "backbone" of our fiber network by connecting our Grants Substation to the Bluewater Substation. CDEC anticipates a rollout of service, beginning this fall. Eventually, everyone in the Grants and Milan area will have access to our high-speed internet service, but it will take time.

What else should we know? CDEC has contracted with Pulse Broadband, another co-op-based company, to survey the equipment currently on our system. This will help us determine which areas are "make ready" and which ones require new poles and/or other upgrades. Pulse is currently surveying the area along West High Street. As the survey progresses, we can expect to receive calls from members interested in subscribing to our internet service. Our goal is to keep you as informed and knowledgeable on the progress, so you can assist members who have questions. Once the survey is complete, we will begin work on the poles and get them ready to attach fiber!

Finally, don't hesitate to ask any of us on the broadband team if you have any questions about the project. We also want to make sure we are all telling our members the same thing :)