

CenturyLink adds fiber to Dubuque's telecom diet

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Company installs a 2nd fiber optic line as part of its response to a June 2012 outage that affected Internet and phone service, including 911 access.

BY ERIN MURPHY

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Telecommunications company CenturyLink has installed a second fiber optic line in Dubuque that will provide a back-up to all area consumers if ever the main line is damaged.

The recently completed project will be formally announced today.

The second fiber optic line will help protect residential and business telecommunications customers from losing Internet and phone services if the main line is damaged, said CenturyLink spokesperson Nancy DeVinay-McNeley.

Even though CenturyLink funded the project, it will not require a service rate increase, she said.

"We understood staying connected is vital and important to customers in the Dubuque area," DeVinay-McNeley said.

"That connectivity is a part of our everyday life now."

Details of the project, including cost, will be revealed at today's event, she said. She said the second line already is receiving traffic.

In June 2012, an excavator accidentally severed a fiber optic line south of Dubuque, causing widespread phone and Internet outages in the area for roughly 4½ hours. The outages affected local 911 lines, which had to be temporarily rerouted. Some businesses reported an inability to process credit card transactions during the outing.

DeVinay-McNeley said CenturyLink already was planning a second line at the time.

"We re-prioritized that project. We immediately took action and got that project moved up," she said.

Dan McDonald, with the Greater Dubuque Development Corp., praised CenturyLink.

"This is key infrastructure, and it's not cheap," McDonald said. He said this project impacts "virtually every single business and home customer in this market."

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