



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEK Broadband Celebrates its 2500th Customer in Victory, Vermont!

Saint Johnsbury, Vermont — On Monday, August 24, installation of NEK Broadband's internet service was completed at the Town Clerk's Office in tiny Victory, Vermont. The town also opted to add phone service.

Tracey Martel, the town clerk, emphasized the importance of reliable internet access: "I can't do my job without the internet." She explained that her previous provider's service was unreliable, and there was often static on the phone line.

Victory is located in Essex County, the most rural county in northeastern Vermont. The town has a population of about 70 people. It was one of the last towns in the state, along with its neighbor, Granby, to receive electric power lines, back in 1963. For these two towns, the only way to get electric service was to contribute money toward the cost of expanding the utility's lines. It took years, but residents organized community potlucks and other events to raise the \$17,000 required as a contribution to the commercial utility.

In contrast, Victory and Granby are not the last communities to receive high-speed internet.

NEK Broadband is not a commercial entity. It is structured similarly to a municipality, although local taxes are not used to fund its work. Grants and subscriber income are currently the sources of funding supporting its goal of providing reliable, fiber-optic internet to every location in the three counties of the Northeast Kingdom that has no service or only access to low-speed service.

For the past six years, a dedicated team of telecommunications professionals, guided by community-appointed board members, has worked toward this goal and has now reached the significant milestone of 2,500 customers. The expansion will continue throughout Essex County, as well as Caledonia and Orleans counties, for the next several years.

When asked about the fact that Victory, despite being remote and having a small potential customer base, is not the last community to receive NEK Broadband service, Martel said, "It's great! It shows that everybody is important."

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NEK Community Broadband (doing business as NEKCV, NEK Broadband and CVFiber) is a communications union district (CUD) that is community-driven and working to ensure every resident with utility service across 72 towns in Northeast and Central Vermont has access to high-speed internet with symmetrical speeds up to two gigabits per second. Affordable internet is central to creating greater economic prosperity and educational opportunities. The communications union district is committed to investing profits into the network, increasing affordability and supporting digital access and literacy. More information is available at nekv.org.