



PRESS RELEASE

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CLALLAM PUD CONNECTS FIRST BUSINESSES IN BROADBAND PILOT PROGRAM

January 3, 2003 – Sawtooth Software, a data analytics firm, is the first business to access Clallam PUD’s fiber optic network. Sawtooth Software is located at 530 West Fir Street, within the 20 square block broadband pilot area between 5th Ave. and Brown Road and Fir and Washington in Sequim. The broadband pilot program also includes Carlsborg Road from Highway 101 north to Idea Place (see maps at <http://www.clallampud.net>).

“Our broadband pilot program will roll out over the next twelve months,” said Fred Mitchell, Telecommunications & Power Resources Manager for Clallam County PUD. “During this time we will evaluate the needs of the public, the interest of service providers, and we will adjust elements of the network such as pricing and future hookup areas accordingly. We look forward to working closely with all stakeholders who will benefit from this essential utility.”

“We need consistent, reliable high-speed Internet connection,” said Chris King, President of Sawtooth Software, which develops and services software to help marketers make decisions about product attributes. “Without it our productivity was being significantly hampered.”

Ronald P. Bell, an attorney at 433 North 5th Street, Sequim, is also connected to the Clallam PUD broadband network. Mr. Bell, along with his associate William Bamman, is required to file legal papers electronically. “Approximately one third of my practice involves electronic court filings. I have been at a real competitive disadvantage with dial-up service,” said Mr. Bell.

Washington State PUDs have been authorized by the Legislature to sell fiber optics (broadband) on a wholesale level. Clallam County PUD has built a 24-mile fiber optic network between Sequim and Port Angeles. Internet Service Providers (ISPs) offer the broadband service directly to the public and are responsible for billing and servicing customers.

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Initially, said Mitchell, service will be geared toward business and municipal services, such as police, fire and county government. Healthcare and education are also two areas that can benefit from broadband, which offers data transfer speeds of up to one Gigabit or 1,000 megabits per second. “Recent tests demonstrated the transfer of a 76-megabyte file across the network in 1 minute 20 seconds. It would take a dialup connection approximately 7 hours to do the same thing,” said Mitchell.

This telecommunications effort is enhanced by Clallam County PUD's membership in a cooperative of PUDs throughout Washington, Oregon, Montana and Idaho called "NoaNet" (Northwest Open Access Network). Work started in 1998 to build a fiber optic backbone among the member Public Utility Districts that utilize Bonneville Power Authority (BPA) fiber across the Northwest. This main network extends the network into Sequim, terminating at the Happy Valley BPA substation.

The Clallam PUD telecommunications network begins at the Happy Valley BPA substation and extends a fully redundant OC-48 fiber ring to Sequim and Port Angeles. Each OC-48 circuit can handle 2.5 Gigabits, or 2.5 billion bits of data per second over two strands of fiber.

Clallam County PUD currently uses telecommunications to transport data, voice and video traffic. This can include teleconferencing and long distance learning. Telecommunications helps Clallam County PUD increase productivity and efficiency. The network also offers the potential for electrical grid management via SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) applications and AMR (Automated Meter Reading).

Since 1944 Clallam PUD has supplied the county with reliable and affordable water and electric services. In 1990 Clallam PUD was authorized to offer sewage system services. In 2002 Clallam PUD added a fourth utility, telecommunications, for its own benefit and public access. Clallam PUD serves 25,000 customers with electric service and has offices in Port Angeles, Sequim, Forks, and Clallam Bay/Seki.

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