

Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services Awarded \$5.94 Million in Broadband Funding

On Thursday, June 23 the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC) announced its latest round of broadband grant winners which included all three projects submitted by Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services (PPCS). In total, PPCS was awarded \$5.94 million of the \$125 million authorized by the PSC. The PSC received a total of 192 applications requesting a total of \$495 million. In their public comments, the PSC noted the impact of public-private partnerships. PPCS received a \$500,000 grant from St. Croix County, \$200,000 from the Town of Kinnickinnic, \$220,000 from the Town of Clifton, \$37,000 from the Town of El Paso, and in-kind support from the Pierce County Economic Development Corporation.

“The public support we received from the towns and St. Croix County is an important part of getting universal broadband coverage across our communities,” stated Nate Boettcher, PPCS president and CEO.

PPCS is currently finishing up its Phase 1 project which built 175 miles of fiber to reach 1500 homes and businesses. Phase 2 began earlier this year and will build 460 miles of fiber passing by 2500 homes and businesses. The latest awards will allow PPCS to build 240 miles passing by another 1500 locations. The awarded projects are expected to begin construction next year with planning and initial make-ready work to begin later this year.

“The PSC has demonstrated its commitment to helping community-owned organizations like PPCS build fiber to serve their friends, families, and neighbors. We are thankful to be good stewards of these funds and to ensure that we offer up to gigabit symmetrical service at an affordable price,” Boettcher said.

The full announcement provided by the PSC can be found at the following link:
https://apps.psc.wi.gov/APPS/NewsReleases/content/PDF_download.aspx?id=728



SwiftCurrent Connect construction of Phase 1 is nearly complete and Phase 2 construction has begun. Phase 3 construction is anticipated to begin next year. The fiber-optic cable follows the PPCS electric infrastructure; the cable has aerial installation where there is overhead electric service and is buried where there is underground electric service.