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For Immediate Release

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Fairfield County Engineer Increases Broadband Access

Lancaster, Ohio – The Fairfield County Engineer’s office announced today the reduction of restrictions for laying fiber cables which will initially open up broadband access to 750 homes and small businesses.

The announcement comes on the heels of a recent study conducted by Connect Ohio in partnership with the Fairfield 33 Development Alliance that showed high demand for broadband access in rural areas of the county. U.S. Representative Steve Stivers has also challenged local governments to focus on providing high-speed internet to rural residents.

"In the 21st Century, broadband is no longer a luxury, it is a necessity. That's why I am committed to bridging the digital divide in our communities," said Stivers. "Today's announcement is an exciting development in the effort to get more homes connected in Southeast Ohio."

The Engineer’s office has lowered the minimum depth to lay fiber on county right-of-way by two feet and will allow more cost effective ways to lay the cable. This lowers the cost for companies and helps make it profitable to provide broadband to rural areas. The providers will be required to secure a bond with the county to ensure that any damage done to farm tiles or roadways will be covered.

"There is a strong demand for better internet service," said Jeremiah Upp, Fairfield County Engineer. "Making these changes will require more work and risk taking on our end, but it's critical to level the playing field when it comes to technology for our rural students, farmers and businesses."

Athens-based Intelliwave worked closely with the engineer’s office on the changes in order to provide fiber optic broadband service to residents in rural Hocking and Madison townships.

"The digital divide in Fairfield County has just narrowed," said Chris Cooper, Intelliwave CEO. "Intelliwave’s mission for the past 15 years has been to bring the highest quality internet service we possibly can to the underserved areas of our region."

"The Connect Ohio study showed the opportunity we had in Fairfield County to improve technology usage for our businesses, workforce, and students," said Rick Szabrak, Fairfield County Economic and Workforce Development Director. "It's great that we have an Engineer that has the vision to help our residents bridge that gap as well as a provider like Intelliwave willing to take the lead."

For more information contact Rick Szabrak at Rick.Szabrak@FairfieldCountyOhio.gov or 740-652-7160. To see if Intelliwave can provide your home or business with fiber access please go to www.intelliwave.com or call 855-U-GET-SPEED.

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