

A BUSY SPRING IS SHAPING UP FOR FIBRE OPTIC IN BROME-MISSISQUOI

Cowansville, March 16, 2021 – The rural area of the MRC Brome-Missisquoi will be among the first in the province of Québec to have full high-speed internet coverage. In less than a year, more than 90% of residences should have access to high-speed internet. The fibre optic rollout has been going well, and it will ramp up over the next few weeks with the arrival of spring and milder temperatures making it easier to repair poles and install fibre optics and equipment. Major advancements were made in the last few months with Bell Canada and Hydro-Québec, the owners of the utility poles, to reduce the delays in getting authorizations.

With these problems out of the way, the pole-climbing crews from [IHR Télécom](#) will be able to quicken their pace to hook up some 6,000 residences and businesses – over more than a 1,000-kilometre stretch of roads – that are still without high-speed internet services. There is a considerable amount of work yet to do and many challenges to overcome (poles to replace or repair, including some complex reparations, supplies of fibre optic cable and all sorts of equipment, etc.). But the collaborative spirit that has been established enables the project's partners to express confidence in completing the work within the scheduled time frame.

Thus far, 2,500 residences and businesses already have access to fibre optic, as part of the current project. Work is entirely completed in Stanbridge-Station and it is almost fully done in the municipalities of Notre-Dame, St-Ignace, the town and township of Bedford, St-Armand, Pike-River and Ste-Sabine. By mid-June, work will be finished in Stanbridge East, Dunham, Frelighsburg, Cowansville, Farnham, East-Farnham, Brigham and Abercorn. Between this summer and next January, Bromont, Brome Lake, Sutton (more than 1,500 doors) and West Bolton will be gradually hooked up to the network.

“People, especially in the eastern part of the MRC, are anxious to get connected to high-speed internet,” said Jacques Drolet, the mayor of West Bolton and the MRC board representative at the partners’ table. “I’m asking them to be patient for a little while longer because the work being done by our partners (Bell, Hydro-Québec, IHR Télécom and the offices of our federal and provincial deputies) is very encouraging. The solutions have enabled the project to advance at a faster pace, and we are confident the bulk of the work will be done within the next 10 months.”

“Bell is proud of the contribution all our partners have made to achieving this project, which will result in hooking up every Brome-Missisquoi citizen to a broadband internet service,” stated Charles Gosselin, the director of governmental relations for Bell. “The discussions with members of the partners’ table allowed us to come up with solutions which helped in accelerating access to thousands of poles on MRC Brome-Missisquoi territory, demonstrating Bell’s commitment to accelerating the deployment of high-speed internet throughout the province of Québec.”

“I am pleased we were able to combine our efforts to find the means we needed to accelerate this priority project for Ms. Bessette,” remarked Isabelle Grenier, the office manager for federal deputy, Lyne Bessette. “Working together is the key, and that’s why we will continue to coordinate the conference table where the people involved in the project meet. We are deeply proud to see the advancement of the hooking-up process, municipality by municipality, because in the end the entire population of Brome-Missisquoi will be the beneficiary.”

“The utility pole owners contributed hugely to this latest breakthrough,” said Hydro-Québec’s Ève-Marie Jodoin. “Along with compliance with the safety regulations that are a part of our activities, we were able to reduce the delays to gain access to our poles by easing the administrative processes so we could collaborate with our partners in Brome-Missisquoi and enable a faster deployment of the fibre optic.”

The project is now on a fast track and Johanne Gauvin, the office manager for Brome-Missisquoi MNA, Isabelle Charest, said it is important for this outstanding collaboration to continue. “I can assure you Ms. Charest is very pleased we have found ways to get the project moving at a faster pace. From my standpoint, I am going to continue to be in close collaboration with Brome-Missisquoi’s table of partners to ensure the project is completed as soon as possible.”

For people who want to be connected as soon as the fibre optic is installed on their road, “we invite you to sign up now on our [site](#) or contact us at 450 346-0057 or 1 888 346-0057 so our installers receive the order in advance, which will help them to better schedule the work,” remarked Benoit Lanciault, the general manager of IHR Télécom. “Meanwhile, you can track the progress of the project with our calendar that is updated monthly on the [MRC](#) website, and please be assured the IHR team is doing everything it can to have this deployment occur as quickly as possible for all of the municipalities which are a part of the MRC Brome-Missisquoi’s project.”

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Source : Robert Desmarais,
Director General, MRC and CLD Brome-Missisquoi
450 266-4900 #228
rdesmarais@mrcbm.qc.ca