



Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

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For Immediate Release – October 26, 2011
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Broadband Plan for Central Wisconsin Launching November 8

Participation by Residents and Leaders Requested

Madison- The Public Service Commission (PSC) announced a public meeting scheduled for Tuesday, November 8, from 4:00 to 6:30 pm in the Laird Room of the Lee S. Dreyfus University Center on the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point (UWSP) campus. The purpose of the public meeting is to launch initiatives to fill in gaps in broadband (high-speed Internet) availability and improve adoption of available broadband services. Those attending the meeting will have the opportunity to start advancing broadband projects. Light refreshments will be served.

The agenda is as follows:

- 4:00 p.m. Welcome and Overview**
- 4:15 p.m. UW demonstration project overview**
- 4:30 p.m. Business Survey Overview**
- 4:45 p.m. Provider Panel**
- 5:30 p.m. Tables and work group sign-ups**

A team of Central Wisconsin community leaders are working to identify ways to fill in gaps in broadband availability and improve adoption of available broadband services. The planning team included representatives from education, health care, business, libraries, regional planning and more. The team developed feasible projects to elicit public and private investment of time and money for more broadband adoption and infrastructure to deploy broadband to more rural areas. The draft plan is designed to enhance the regional economic development and quality of life by initially focusing on improving access and utilization of broadband by small businesses and telecommuters in underserved areas.



“As Centergy works to recruit talent, business and industry to Central Wisconsin, we know that information technology infrastructure is just as critically important as four-lane highways and a regional airport,” said Barb Fleisner, Executive Director of Centergy, Inc.

“We look forward to working with the PSC and private providers to enhance broadband technology in our region.”

“Affordable and reliable broadband access is no longer a luxury to be envied,” said Lori Belongia, Marshfield Public Library Director. “It is essential to enhancing our region’s economy, health, education and recreation. It assures that no matter where you live, you have access to the tools you need to live a better life.”

“Broadband access is critical to the overall economic success of our region,” said Dennis Lawrence, Executive Director of the North Central Regional Planning Commission. “Without it we are at a

competitive disadvantage. If we want jobs we need broadband. Access to broadband allows our region to connect to the rest of nation and the world. It is crucial for business, education, and government, as well as all of the residents our region.”

A regional leadership team consisting of representatives of internet providers, education, businesses, and government will be formed and meet later this Fall to act on recommendations in the plan.

Maps of where broadband exists across the state are online at <http://wi.linkamericadata.org>. The Central Wisconsin regional plan is available online at www.link.wisconsin.gov or by contacting Barb Fleisner at 715-843-9563. Those without internet access can view the maps and regional plan at a local library or other facility with public computers.

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