



### *Who is WiredWest?*

Massachusetts laws allow towns to own and operate utility companies called Municipal Light Plants (MLP's). WiredWest is a Cooperative of town MLP's joining together for operational efficiencies and cost savings. The coop is governed by delegates from the member towns for the purpose of delivering high quality broadband service to all residents of member towns.

### *What service will be provided and how much will it cost?*

- Standard - 1 Gig service (= 1000 Mbps) - \$75/mo.
- Economy - (25 Mbps) service - \$59/mo (compare to DSL typically 3 Mbps).
- Full featured phone service including unlimited domestic long distance can be added on for \$19/mo.

Note that combining Internet with phone service can replace your Verizon service. You can keep your current phone number. Your town may add a surcharge to the fees above for town network expenses.

### *Why is it taking so long to get Broadband service?*

Before WiredWest can deliver service, towns must build fiber broadband networks. The Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) originally said it would pay 40% of the cost and build a regional broadband network to be owned and operated by WiredWest. Many of you signed up when that was the plan. Since then, the MBI has changed course several times, now requiring towns to individually own their networks. The MBI's shifting policies and cumbersome process have caused long delays. In response to our lobbying, the Administration is ***now offering towns grants of their full share of state funds to build networks independently of the MBI***, to be owned by the individual towns. Progress should be much quicker now.

### *Why should towns build and own their own network?*

Our current lack of broadband shows that we are not profitable enough for private providers. The state is offering them grants to build networks that they would own and operate. Some towns have received offers. But ***allowing a single private company to own our primary means of communication is a very risky proposition for our small towns***. Private companies are primarily responsible to their owners or shareholders, not to their customers, and could sell the network at any time. Without competition and with low profitability, there is no incentive for them to devote the resources necessary to provide high quality service to all residents. In some cases, they are offering to initially cover only a portion of the town. Without further subsidies the remainder of the town will never get service. Unlike phone service, Internet is not regulated, so companies have no mandate to reach all residents and there are no quality or price controls.

If towns own their network, important decisions that affect cost, coverage, and net neutrality and privacy policies will be under local control, not dictated by multinational corporations. Most of our towns do not have the resources to manage a network. However, working together through our WiredWest Coop, we can offer:

- A large pool of resources and skilled volunteers
- Economy of scale and bargaining power for lower prices
- Ability to reduce risk and increase stability
- Commitment to customers, not stockholders
- Profit sharing
- Commitment to net neutrality and your privacy

For more information, go to <http://wiredwest.net>