Horizon’s Fiber Optic Network Construction Continues
Connecting Appalachia Project more than 60% Complete

CHILlicothe, OH (October 17, 2012)  Construction of the Connecting Appalachia project, a 34-county fiber optic broadband infrastructure network, is more than half way complete.

Horizon Telcom, a Chillicothe, Ohio-based broadband provider, began work on the three-year project in May, 2011. Connecting Appalachia, once complete in July, 2013, will provide high-capacity broadband services with speeds of up to 10 Gigabits per second to businesses, governmental agencies, educational and healthcare facilities. Currently, more than 20 counties in southern Ohio are operating on the new fiber optic network.

“Our construction crews are continuing to install new fiber optic cables and working hard to complete the network that will literally change the way that businesses work, students learn and people communicate,” said Steve Steele, Horizon vice president.

During a press conference with U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown, Steele emphasized the importance of this new fiber infrastructure and how it will enhance the ability of businesses in Appalachia Ohio to compete on a level playing field with metropolitan services in rural areas.

“The impact of this project is enormous,” Steele said. “Historically, broadband connectivity in many areas of Appalachia Ohio has been limited or nonexistent causing stunting growth and innovation. Communities now will have the opportunity to grow with greater economic development utilizing this world-class network.”

Horizon is building its new network with partial federal funding from a $66.4 million Broadband Technologies Opportunity Program (BTOP) stimulus grant, awarded to the company in August, 2010. The grant, awarded by the National Telecommunications Infrastructure Administration (NTIA), will fund 70% of the $94.9 million project, with Horizon providing the remaining 30%.

Once complete, the project will provide high-capacity broadband services over a nearly 2,000-mile network to regional community anchor institutions, including healthcare facilities, community colleges, universities, K-12 schools, county public safety
answering points and industrial parks. Currently, most of the facilities lack fiber-based broadband access and/or the necessary minimum speeds to match their Internet needs.

Horizon’s project is part of a comprehensive statewide public-private partnership called the Ohio Middle Mile Consortium (OMMC). The OMMC is facilitated by the Ohio Academic Resources Network (OARnet), the technology operations arm of the University System of Ohio.

The OMMC, backed in part by U.S. Sen. Brown, was created to integrate three regional projects submitted by Horizon, ComNet and OneCommunity. The three BTOP projects total nearly $208 million with $141 million provided with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds. Once complete, the three projects will add nearly 3,660 miles of new fiber optic cable in virtually all of Ohio’s 88 counties.

About Horizon - With corporate offices in Chillicothe, Ohio, Horizon Telcom is a leading broadband provider of advanced data services in southern and eastern Ohio. Utilizing its extensive network of fiber optic cable, Horizon delivers advanced high speed data services, Internet, voice, digital video, security and monitoring services. Horizon’s entrepreneurial heritage and long-standing commitment to remarkable customer care ensures its devotion to connecting its customers to their worlds through the delivery of cutting-edge broadband technology and proven telecommunication systems.

For more information about Horizon, visit the company’s website at [www.horizontel.com](http://www.horizontel.com).

About OMMC – The Ohio Middle Mile Consortium (OMMC) is a public-private partnership of broadband providers facilitated by the Ohio Academic Resources Network (OARnet) to create a collaborative and sustainable statewide broadband network. OMMC members include ComNet, Inc., OneCommunity, OARnet and Horizon. For more information about OMMC, visit [www.ohiomiddlemile.org](http://www.ohiomiddlemile.org).