



Media Contact: Jessica Ditto
jditto@connectednation.org
(202) 251-4749

For Immediate Release
December 20, 2011

[Access the Findings](#)

Connect Minnesota Releases New Broadband Availability Report

ST. PAUL, MN – Today, Connect Minnesota released an assessment of broadband availability in Minnesota in a report titled, *Broadband Availability in Minnesota: Measuring Progress*.

This report, which is available [online](#), outlines the statewide results of a broadband inventory with the aim of sparking stakeholder discussions on key policy goals and strategies to expand and enhance the broadband opportunities for all Minnesota residents.

Key findings from this report:

- Broadband is available to 97.08% of Minnesota households, leaving 61,000 Minnesota households unable to connect to high-speed Internet.
- 81.2% of Minnesota households can access broadband at advertised speeds of 6 Mbps download/1.5 Mbps upload, meaning that 392,000 households are in areas that may be eligible for Universal Service Fund broadband deployment subsidies.
- 57.4% of Minnesota households can access broadband at speeds of at least 10 Mbps download/6 Mbps upload – the minimum speed threshold for Minnesota’s goal of ubiquitous broadband availability. This means that across the state, approximately 889,000 households are not connected to services that meet the state’s target.
- 93.75% of rural households in Minnesota have access to broadband.
- 84.19% of Minnesota households have the ability to choose broadband service from two or more non-mobile broadband providers.

Note: *The data in this report are subject to data validation.*

A key difference in this report from past availability releases is that the estimates were created with the new 2010 Census data, which showed an increase of over 190,000 households in Minnesota. In addition, much of the availability data released today includes a minimum upload speed threshold of 1.5 Mbps, whereas other releases utilized 200 kbps upload speeds.

In August 2011, Governor Mark Dayton signed an Executive Order that established the Governor's Task Force on Broadband and reiterated the state's goal of ensuring that all residents and businesses have access to broadband at download speeds of at least 10-20 Mbps and upload speeds of at least 5-10 Mbps.

To help the state measure its progress toward these goals, Connect Minnesota has partnered with the Governor's Task Force on Broadband and the Minnesota Department of Commerce to collect and validate broadband availability data statewide. As directed by the Governor's Executive Order, the Task Force will be submitting its first report by December 31, 2011 and will include key elements of the availability data.

"Access to, together with adoption and utilization of high-speed broadband are key elements for Minnesota's economic growth in the next decade. The data in this report—as with our other research—will allow the Governor's Broadband Task Force and all stakeholders to have benchmarks upon which to build effective policy recommendations," said Bill Hoffman, Program Manager for Connect Minnesota. "Clearly we have moved forward thanks to providers, communities and broadband proponents; but we still have work to do to meet the goals set by the Minnesota Legislature."

In May of 2010, Connect Minnesota produced an initial map of broadband availability to identify served and unserved areas across the state. Since the initial map's release, Connect Minnesota has collected and released new data every six months, with updates in October 2010, April 2011, and October 2011.

###

About Connect Minnesota: As a public-private partnership, Connect Minnesota partners with technology-minded businesses, government entities and universities to accelerate technology in the state. The work of Connect Minnesota is made possible by support from the Minnesota Department of Commerce. For more information about what Connect Minnesota is doing to accelerate technology in Minnesota's communities, visit www.connectmn.org.

Follow **Connect Minnesota** on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).