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Answers to all your questions about fiber construction

Story by JEN CALHOUN

As an Eastex customer service representative, Missy Cannon gets questions all the time. Lately, the biggest questions she hears are “When is fiber broadband coming to my house?” and “What’s all this construction?”

Cannon, a 29-year veteran of Eastex, has seen some big changes in our services over the years. When she started in 1993, Eastex was getting ready to offer dial-up internet service. Now, we’re constructing a cutting-edge fiber network — something many larger metropolitan areas still don’t have access to. “People are so excited about it,” Cannon says. “To have fiber internet in a rural setting — well, it’s wonderful and kind of unusual. But customers have a lot of questions.”

Because of that fact, we’ve compiled a list of some of the most frequently asked questions and their answers. We hope these provide all our customers and community a better understanding of this multilevel infrastructure project.

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— Missy Cannon, *Eastex customer service representative*



CONSTRUCTION

Q: Why is the construction occurring?

A: Simply put, Eastex’s existing copper network has reached the end of its useful life, and we’re upgrading to fiber. Fiber is considered the gold standard for residential and business internet and gives users super-fast speeds over longer distances with minimal interference. Fiber is faster than any other internet delivery system available. It’s also extremely resistant to corrosion and deterioration, and it won’t be affected by electromagnetic interference. While regular broadband is still effective, fiber is future-proof. No matter how sophisticated computers, tablets, phones and other devices become, fiber can meet the demand.

Q: How long does construction usually last?

A: Once construction crews get to your area, it usually takes three months or more, depending on the number of homes passed, the ease in obtaining required permits and right-of-way use, and unforeseen weather delays.

Q: Am I paying for all this construction?

A: No. Eastex is paying for all the labor and capital expenditure associated with the fiber network upgrades and fiber-to-the-home improvements.



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SERVICES

Q: I already have Eastex services. Does this affect me?

A: Yes. Up until now, Eastex customers got all services through copper networks. As we replace those networks with fiber, existing customers who continue with us will need to be cut over to the new fiber network.

Q: What do I have to do to get my existing services cut over to fiber?

A: You'll need to fill out some paperwork that gives us permission to bury fiber on your property and install an optical network device. The device connects our fiber network to your home or business. While we're converting you to fiber, Eastex staff and contractors will need access to your premises so they can install new equipment. When construction is getting close, our representatives will go door-to-door in your area. If you're not there, we'll leave a package of information with details on next steps.

Q: How will my fiber service be any different?

A: You shouldn't notice any difference in your voice services. Your internet service will be faster and more reliable, allowing you to use even more devices to simultaneously stream, game, work, listen to music and more. The service comes with a free battery backup device that provides a minimum of eight hours of service during a power outage.

Q: Are the higher internet speeds a lot more expensive?

A: No. In fact, with our fiber internet packages, you'll get more value for comparable monthly rates.



INSTALLATION

Q: Will the fiber installation cause damage to my property?

A: Our fiber installation causes minimal damage, if any. Our crews generally use a small vibratory plow that makes a tiny rip in the yard to bury the fiber. Once it's buried, we pack the yard back down. Typically, any effects from the disruption are resolved within a week.

Q: How will I know if the person knocking on my door is a legitimate Eastex representative?

A: All of the Eastex staff and contracted personnel should be in Eastex-branded vehicles and should have Eastex-issued name badges. If you have any questions or concerns about the personnel working on-site, please contact us.

Q: When will fiber be available at my house or business?

A: We're working to expand our fiber network throughout Eastex's service territory to as many people as possible as fast as we can. Please let us know if you're interested in fiber service. Our company has invested more than \$295 million in our network, with over \$60 million invested over the past two years alone. 📞

Call us!

Please call Eastex to find out more about fiber packages, ask questions about construction and crews and for anything else you need. Our numbers are **903-854-1000** in Henderson, **936-967-1000** in Livingston and **903-687-3600** in Waskom. You can also visit our website at **eastex.com** and like our Facebook page.