

iMAN continues to deploy broadband across Steuben

By Jennifer Decker | Posted: Thursday, December 29, 2011 12:00 am

ANGOLA — The Indiana Metropolitan Area Network continued with its deployment plan throughout Steuben County through fiber optic broadband technology.

It was one of the top technology stories of the year in Steuben County in 2011.

Some highlights from this year include:

- about 75 percent of preparing utility poles for the addition of fiber is completed;
- about 85 percent of “clotheslining,” which is hanging a strand of fiber is completed;
- underground boring and placement of an inner duct is 25 percent complete;
- permitting with the Indiana Department of Transportation, the Steuben County Highway Department and Indiana Northeastern Railroad is about 90 percent complete — which is ahead of schedule;
- spools of fiber are being delivered and the completed installation should be by mid-January.

Remaining planned connections in Angola, Ashley, Fremont, Hamilton, Hudson, and Orland should be finished by mid-summer, barring any unforeseen problems.

Sharon Stroh, iMAN director of business development, said the fiber optic broadband project allows high speed data transfers and secure access for very large data users. iMAN is an arm of the Steuben County Community Foundation.

“The benefits of this stage of deployment will expand public safety by making connections for the North EMS Station, 911, and a Flint communications tower,” Stroh said. “It will also expand education use by connecting Pleasant Lake Elementary to the



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Some multiple count fiber spools awaited installation by the Indiana Metropolitan Area Network. iMAN is planning on completing connections in Angola, Ashley, Fremont, Hamilton, Hudson and Orland by mid-summer. Photo contributed

(Metropolitan School District) loop, plus add Hamilton and Prairie Heights School corporation. Last, but not least, business requests in Ashley, Hamilton and Hudson will be fulfilled.”

According to the iMAN website, goangolain.com, broadband technology is a key to economic growth. The iMAN website also noted the technology is particularly critical in rural areas, as advanced communications can help remote communities.

In Steuben County, the fiber optic technology is being used by government, industry, education and health care with the highest speed data transmission services available.

“Another important element of the iMAN project will be the ability to shake hands with the adjacent communities of DeKalb and LaGrange if they wish to construct a fiber loop in their (counties),” Stroh said.

In another technology matter, Angola opted to purchase five iPads for elected officials in hopes of saving money on paper and printing costs. The city will purchase five Apple iPads at a cost of \$599 each. Clerk-Treasurer Deb Twitchell estimated the purchase will be offset by saving around \$3,000 annually in paper and printing costs. The iPads will be purchased next year for Mayor Dick Hickman, Twitchell, and Council members Gary Crum, Dave Olson, and Mike McClelland. Council members Kathy Armstrong and Dave Martin opted to use their own personal iPads for city usage.