

Demonstrated Experience

With close to 100 years of providing communication services to multiple communities in rural Iowa, West Iowa Telephone Company dba WesTel Systems (WesTel) has proven the dedication to keeping Iowans connected. Internet was first offered in 1996 to all exchanges. Over the last 25 years, WesTel has continued to improve broadband by providing advanced services that connect customers to the world. In July 2020, WesTel was recognized by NTCA as a Gig-Capable Smart Rural Community Provider.

The first fiber-to-the-home (FTTH) project began in 2010. The company continuously deployed FTTH technology, upgrading eight communities throughout six exchanges by 2016. Immediately following successful fiber upgrades to all in-town customers, WesTel began rural fiber construction. In addition to the rural customers located within the exchange boundaries, WesTel has done targeted build-outs to unserved or underserved homes located outside our exchange. In addition to over 3,700 customers in our exchanges, we currently serve 71 households and businesses out of our exchange boundaries.

In August 2020, WesTel was awarded the Empower Rural Iowa Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant (NOFA #3) to assist with a rural fiber build near Anita, Iowa. That project was successfully completed underbudget and before the expected completion date.

Broadband has become an essential part of many people's lives. WesTel strives to ensure every customer has a great experience and receives reliable broadband to further telework, telemedicine, and distance learning. WesTel's positive reputation has resulted in many rural Northwest Iowa residents seeking to receive service from WesTel, as evidenced in the attached letters of support.