



# The Huntsville Times

## FCC gives approval to IBEC's broadband electric service

Thursday, October 11, 2007

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Rural areas in the U.S., international markets will soon reap benefits

Huntsville-based International Broadband Electric Communications Inc., said Wednesday it will begin deploying broadband Internet service to rural areas within the next month.

The move comes after IBEC's BPL (broadband over power line) Regenerator Unit and Customer Service Unit both gained certification from the Federal Communications Commission.

IBEC will initially begin installing the devices for three rural electric cooperatives in Alabama, Indiana and Virginia, providing broadband service for some 105,000 customers, the company said in a news release.

In Alabama, IBEC will install its BPL products for Cullman Electric Cooperative.

IBEC received a \$19.2 million loan from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Utility Service to make the technology available to underserved areas.

Historically, rural communities have had their Internet service limited to dial-up, which can be much slower than broadband. IBEC plans to take its products to rural areas around the country, as well as international markets where phone lines are unreliable or unavailable.

"IBEC's focus since its inception has been to provide BPL services to rural electric utilities and the underserved residents of rural America - those citizens who are often neglected but who have the same need for broadband services as those living in urban and suburban America," said Scott E. Lee, IBEC's CEO. "IBEC's BPL equipment, coupled with the USDA funding, will allow IBEC to begin building the broadband networks necessary to serve rural America and close the digital divide."

In 2005, the Federal Communications Commission approved the use of power lines for delivering broadband services. With BPL service, customers can plug a modem into a wall power outlet to gain access to broadband services.

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