

Tennessee First State To Provide Reading County-By-County Of Internet Speeds

Connected Tennessee researchers have announced the release of the nation's first county-by-county reading of average Internet speeds across Tennessee. This county-based Internet speed map will give providers of broadband and Tennessee policymakers a more accurate understanding of which Tennessee communities remain in need of higher quality service in order to utilize the latest applications that benefit local and state government as well as private industry.

Through a collective effort between SpeedTest.net, the Communications Workers of America's (CWA) Speed Matters Campaign and Connected Tennessee, the project surveyed more than 86,000 people from Tennessee's 95 counties. Tennessee residents can continue to update the data by participating in a speed test on Connected Tennessee's website, www.connectedtennessee.org. Speed tracking provides the state of Tennessee and Connected Tennessee with an accurate reading of the types of speeds being achieved by consumers around the state.

"The data gathered by Connected Tennessee allows us to see for the first time where improvement is needed and work to localize our efforts," said Governor Phil Bredesen. "Technology adoption and economic development go hand in hand, and we want to work to ensure that Tennesseans everywhere can realize the opportunities that are possible when all communities are truly connected."

The maps reveal that the average statewide upload speed is 575 kilobits per second (Kbps) and the average statewide download speed is 3.4 megabits per second (Mbps). This means that the average Tennessee with broadband service can download a typical 1 megabyte document in less than three seconds. For those on dial-up service, the same process would take almost four minutes. Fifteen of Tennessee's 95 counties registered significantly lower than the average upload speed,



while 30 counties fell short of the average download speed.

"The United States has fallen to 16th in the world in terms of access to broadband Internet," said Noah Savant, Vice President of the Communications Workers of America. "The data collected by the Speed Matters Campaign and Connected Tennessee is designed to encourage the build-out of high-speed networks ultimately to provide not only all Tennesseans, but all Americans with the ability to access the immeasurable benefits afforded by a high-speed connection."

State Representative Mark Maddox, co-chair of the Tennessee Broadband Task Force commented: "The rural areas of our state are lagging behind and warrant the attention of the task force, and Connected Tennessee and these maps make that very apparent."

The upload and download speed maps as well as Tennessee broadband availability maps can be accessed on the Connected Tennessee website at www.connectedtn.org/mapping&research/availabilitymaps/.

The data gathered for these maps will help Connected Tennessee take steps to improve technology availability and adoption among Tennessee residents and businesses. Connected Tennessee's mission is to close the digital divide in Tennessee by creating and growing a collaborative network among telecommunications and information technology providers, public agencies, business and community leaders, researchers and universities in an effort to meet the five comprehensive goals of Governor Bredesen's *Trail to Innovation*:

Affordable broadband technology for all Tennessee;

Dramatically improved use of computers and the Internet by all Tennesseans;

The formation of eCommunity Leadership Teams in every county – local leaders who assemble to develop and implement technology growth strategies for local government, business and industry, education, healthcare, agriculture, libraries, tourism and community-based organizations;

A policy and regulatory framework that encourages continued investment in communications and information technologies year after year; and

A meaningful online presence for all Tennessee communities to improve citizen services and promote economic development through e-government, virtual education and online healthcare.

Connected Tennessee has also released maps that provide a very detailed picture of where broadband does and does not exist across Tennessee. The first Broadband Inventory Map was released on July 27, 2007. Tennessee is only the second state to benefit from such detailed and accurate maps of broadband availability. Connected Tennessee is one of a growing number of states working with Connected Nation, Inc., (www.connectednation.org) a national nonprofit with a reputation for forming public-private partnerships that help states expand broadband to mostly rural and unserved communities through mapping, research, and program implementation.

Connected Tennessee is leading the way into a new economy for Tennesseans. As Tennessee's technology-based economic development partnership, Connected Tennessee is a public-private alliance of leaders from private industry, government and education. By leveraging the latest in technology and networking, Connected Tennessee is ensuring Tennessee is a better place for business and an even better place to live.

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