



Press Release

Department of Technical Operations/Winterthur Public Utilities and Swisscom

Winterthur/Berne, 9 March 2010 / 10:00

Fibre-optic network for Winterthur

Winterthur is about to get high-speed Internet access within the next few years: Swisscom is to start rolling out its fibre-optic network in March 2010. The roll-out will be coordinated with Winterthur Public Utilities to avoid any duplication. The two companies are currently engaged in cooperation talks to push ahead with the fibre-optic roll-out faster and more cost-effectively. Once the negotiations are complete, the City Council and Winterthur Public Utilities will submit a relevant bill to parliament and local residents for approval.

Swisscom is due to start expanding the fibre-optic network in March. The roll-out will take place in close coordination with Winterthur Public Utilities to prevent duplication and the inconvenience of unnecessary building work for Winterthur residents. Negotiations are currently being held between the two companies so they can collaborate in rolling out the fibre-optic network. Over the next few months, Swisscom and Winterthur Public Utilities will put together a cooperation agreement. The parties are confident that an agreement will be reached as a common concept for the necessary network architecture is already in place.

High-speed Internet for the future

Compared with other countries, Winterthur – like the rest of Switzerland – currently leads the field when it comes to broadband Internet. The construction of a fibre-optic network constitutes a location factor and, as such, needs to be tackled straightaway to cover future broadband demand from businesses and residential customers and safeguard its competitiveness in the process. As part of the ongoing cooperation negotiations, both parties appreciate the importance of building and operating the network as cost-effectively as possible.

Customers to reap the benefits

Swisscom will start rolling out the network in the Winterthur-Seen district. Four fibres will be laid per household. Competition in the telecoms market will be further promoted as all service providers will receive non-discriminatory access to the network even if they have not invested in the infrastructure themselves. Customers will benefit in that they will receive fibre-optic access faster, will be able to choose between offerings from different service providers and will also be able to switch providers easily.

Politicians and residents to decide on the network of the future

Once the negotiations with Swisscom are complete, the City Council and Winterthur Public Utilities will submit a bill to parliament and local residents. This will describe the key commercial aspects as well as the timetable for rolling out the fibre-optic network. The City Council and local residents are expected to be able to vote on the bill in the autumn.