

Meilen, Herrliberg and Swisscom sign cooperation agreement on fibre-optic expansion

The Meilen energy supplier – Energie und Wasser Meilen AG (EWM) – and the municipality of Herrliberg have signed a cooperation agreement with Swisscom on the joint construction of fibre-optic networks. This will ensure that all interested customers and providers will have access to fibre-optic connections in the future.

For the past three years, EWM and the municipality of Herrliberg have been building an open and comprehensive fibre-optic network dubbed "meifi.net". Following protracted negotiations, they signed a preliminary agreement with Swisscom in June 2012 for the joint construction of their fibre-optic networks, which will run all the way to individual households and businesses (known as Fiber to the Home or FTTH). The partners finally concluded a cooperation agreement in late December. The meifi.net and Swisscom fibre-optic networks will now be built collaboratively, and customers will in future have access to the services offered by both partners.

The collaboration enables both parties to set up their networks more cheaply and spares the general public from the unnecessary impact that would have resulted from the parallel construction of separate networks. Dividing connection areas between the cooperation partners will allow them to capitalise on synergy effects and cut costs. Half of the connections for businesses and homes set up by meifi.net will be made available to Swisscom and vice versa. As a result, both partners will in future be able to offer their fibre-optic services throughout the entire region.

Four fibres for every home

Four optical fibres will be laid for each household and business. Swisscom and meifi.net will each receive two fibres in order to offer customers their services. This multi-fibre model is in line with recommendations put forward by the regulatory authority, the Federal Communications Commission (ComCom). Customers will therefore be free to choose from which provider they want to obtain their TV, Internet and telephone services.

Completion by 2014 and 2018

About a third of the homes and businesses in Meilen have already been provided with fibre-optic connections by meifi.net. These connections will be incorporated into the construction partnership. The cooperation partners will connect the remaining households by the end of 2014 in the case of Herrliberg and 2018 in Meilen's case. This will mean that the two lakeside municipalities will have ultra-fast Internet and multimedia connections and therefore be well prepared for the digital future.

Brief profile**meifi.net**

meifi.net is the fibre-optic network currently being developed in the district of Meilen. At present, the municipalities of Meilen and Herrliberg are involved, with further municipalities to be added in the future. meifi.net provides connected households and businesses with access to numerous providers of state-of-the-art Internet, telephone and multimedia services meifi.net is being set up by local energy supplier Energie und Wasser Meilen AG (EWM AG) and the municipality of Herrliberg

Swisscom fibre-optic network

Swisscom connects a new household or business in Switzerland to the fibre-optic network roughly every two minutes. By the end of September 2012, Swisscom and its partners had connected approximately 465,000 households and businesses to the network by running fibre-optic cables into the basement. This figure is set to rise to around a million by the end of 2015 – one-third of all households.

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