



Attention News, Business, Technology & Assignment Editors:

Toronto Hydro Telecom announces blanket Wi Fi coverage in downtown Toronto core

TORONTO, March 7 /CNW/ - TORONTO HYDRO TELECOM INC. (www.thtelecom.ca) today announced plans to provide a blanket of Wi Fi coverage in the downtown core of Canada's largest city, making Toronto the largest Wi Fi zone in Canada.

"We are proud to be the first company in Canada to deliver a ubiquitous Wi Fi zone, which will provide Internet access as well as next generation applications," said David Dobbin, President, Toronto Hydro Telecom. "Wi Fi technology is the new benchmark for urban living. It's standard equipment in many electronic devices, from laptops to portable entertainment units. We think it's time to enable that technology to be used in what will be the largest Wi Fi zone in Canada. Today we're opening the door for Toronto to join the ranks of other major international cities such as San Francisco, Philadelphia and London, England."

The plan calls for Toronto Hydro Telecom - the competitive telecommunications subsidiary of Toronto Hydro Corporation - to install radio access points on streetlighting poles throughout the six square kilometer area that stretches from Jarvis Street west to Spadina Avenue, and from Front Street north to Bloor Street. Installing the access points on streetlighting poles, which are evenly situated throughout the downtown service area, will enable Toronto Hydro Telecom to avoid the pitfalls of most Wi Fi service offerings whose access points are predominantly housed in coffee shops and restaurants, making connectivity sporadic or non-existent. The streetlighting poles are assets owned by Toronto Hydro Street Lighting Inc.

"This is both an exciting and very important initiative for the City of Toronto," said Mayor David Miller. "It puts us on the leading edge of the telecommunications industry nation-wide and globally. The applications for Torontonians and our various City agencies from libraries to public transportation and safety to economic development make this a historic moment in Toronto's development as a world-class city."

The new Wi Fi zone will be implemented in stages. The first phase - located in the City's financial core from Front Street to Queen Street,

between Spadina Avenue and Church Street - is planned for completion at the end of June, 2006. The entire Wi Fi zone will be completely operational by December 31, 2006.

During the first six months of operation, Toronto Hydro Telecom will offer customers free access to its new Wi Fi zone, after which time a variety of access packages will be available at competitive rates.

An RFP for equipment vendors was issued on February 8, 2006. Once the vendor of record has been selected, installation of the radio access points will be entrusted to Toronto Hydro Streetlighting employees who are members of CUPE Local 1.

Toronto Hydro Telecom Inc. is the telecom subsidiary of Toronto Hydro Corporation, which is fully-owned by the City of Toronto. A highly specialized and innovative provider of telecom services to businesses in Toronto, Toronto Hydro Telecom owns and operates a fibre optic network that spans 450 kilometres and connects more than 450 commercial buildings in Toronto and with interconnections to utility-affiliated telecom networks bordering the GTA.

(*) A Service Area Map and Fact Sheet are available with this release and can be downloaded from www.thtelecom.ca. A photo from today's announcement is available on the CP Photo network to members of the Canadian Press.

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