

Galien Township Fire Department

P.O. Box 246
Galien, Michigan 49113

...To Serve, Educate & Protect.

February 15, 2023

Michigan High-Speed Office (MI-HI)

Please accept this letter as written support of the ongoing efforts to bring Broadband service to the Village and Township of Galien.

Like most organizations in 2023, the need for reliable, high-speed broadband is critical to our operations. This is especially true as it relates to fire protection efforts for the community during all phases of our job – from planning to responding to post-incident reporting.

Currently, our understanding is that the entire industrial park, including the Fire Station, is served by a single DSL/T1 line. An independent consulting firm, DCS Technology Design, LLC, has indicated that the line is woefully insufficient for the combined needs of our Fire Department and surrounding industrial park businesses.

The need for broadband speeds and reliability has grown over the past few years. Even for our small, volunteer fire department, our needs are well beyond our current basic T1/DSL connection.

Our broadband needs start with our emergency pre-planning efforts. We utilize a web-based platform to help firefighters manage our equipment checklists and inventory management to ensure a constant state of readiness. Google Earth allows us to pre-plan specific properties, identify rural water sources and extra long driveways that require special tactics during emergencies efficiently from the fire house. The firefighters utilize web-based training software to maintain compliance with the State of Michigan Continuing Education requirements. We are mobilized by a central dispatch center that sends critical incident details over a web-based system that also allows volunteer responders to report their availability for the incident in real time. We are able to efficiently find our way to emergency scenes utilizing mapping software such as Google maps. When an emergency response has ended, we actively participate in the National Fire Incident Reporting System and provide valuable incident information to the Federal Government via their web-based portal.

All of the above web-based applications need more bandwidth than the current connection can reliably and efficiently provide. There is a critical need for high-speed internet for effective, organized emergency preparedness and operations, especially when time is of the essence. That is the current situation and it's only likely to worsen in the future as the bandwidth requirements of these applications grow.

Put quite simply, based upon all of the above, it is of utmost importance that an emergency services organization, i.e. our Fire Department, have access to high speed, reliable broadband. **We simply cannot continue to have insufficient internet service at our Fire Station, as it is detrimental to our ability to prepare for and respond to emergencies.**

Sincerely,

Ted Chase

Ted Chase
Fire Chief