

# ALPINE COMMUNIQUÉ

Real Access. Real Value. Real People.



Q2 2023 Newsletter

## 2023 Fiber Optic Projects

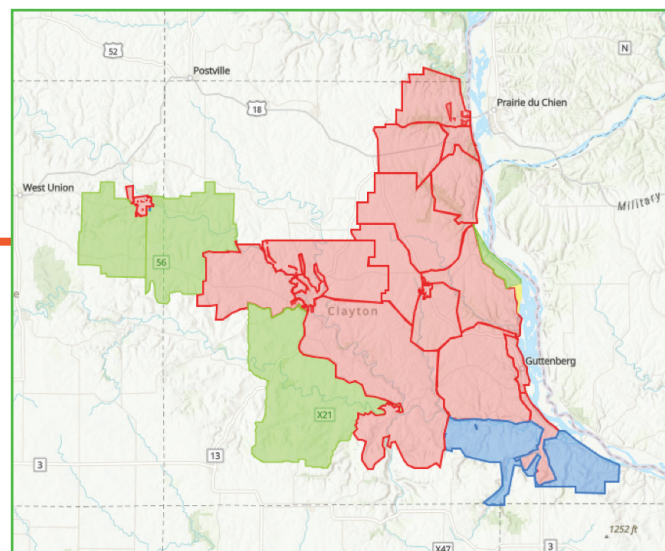
Alpine Communications continues making major investments in expanding our 100% fiber-optic network to the rural areas around Elgin, Clayton and south of Elkader. We were fortunate to be awarded an Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant to partially fund this project and have been diligently working to get our customers connected to our fiber optic network. (563-245-1286)

The Fusion Network powered by 100% fiber optics, will allow us to deliver ultra-fast internet service, high levels of reliability and sound quality while ensuring you can connect the way you want in the future. We are making this investment because we are focused on delivering reliable high-performing services allowing you to thrive.

At Alpine Communications, we believe that our corner of Iowa is truly a special place to live and work. And we are honored that our cutting-edge fiber broadband technology is expanding our community's horizons and helping people and small businesses realize their dreams and thrive in the decades to come.

Visit [www.alpinecom.net/join](http://www.alpinecom.net/join) to check if your address falls in the construction area for 2023.

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Our Fiber projects begin with a visit to locations within the construction area identified in green.



**During the visit, our technician will work with you to:**

1. Discuss the benefits of fiber optic services available once connect to the Fusion network
2. Connect to Alpine and stay in the loop on our construction progress
3. Determine the appropriate place to install a new Optical Network Terminal (ONT) on your home
4. Identify underground wiring or piping on your property
5. Determine if your basement is accessible to running wires for new services inside the home or business
6. Address questions or concerns you may have with constructing fiber-optic services on your property
7. Identify how you can take advantage of your new connection to our fiber optic network

**If you have not yet had a visit from a technician, please give us a call at 563-245-4000 and schedule it today.** We want to make sure visits are completed before construction begins in your area.



To receive emails and text messages about construction progress, maintenance, bill payment and other notifications, sign up for SmartHub at <https://alpinecom.smarthub.coop/Login.html> or download the app today.

If your phone number appears in parentheses (XXX-XXXX) in this edition of the Alpine Communiqué, please give us a call at 563-245-4000 by May 31, 2023, and we'll apply a \$5 credit to your account!



# Aureon Partners with Alpine Communications through the Ripple Effect Program to Address Childcare Needs in Clayton County

On March 17, 2023, members of the Clayton County Development Group, Alpine Communications, Ripple Effect, and Aureon met at Alpine Communications in Elkader. Clayton County Development Group and area partners are teaming up to address the growing need for quality daycare in Clayton County, Iowa. Local organizations are applying for the Rural Child Care Market Student Grant through the State of Iowa, which requires applicants to demonstrate investment in the project process by providing a \$5,000 match. Aureon and Alpine Communications donated a total of \$2,000 for this project. The grant funds will go towards funding a county-wide daycare needs assessment, which will help identify the most pressing childcare needs in the area.

Clayton County has a workforce need of around 119 employees, and daycare and housing are two factors that hinder finding individuals to fill those positions. In preliminary discussions, families have shared that they drive thirty to forty minutes to get their children to daycare before going to work. Darla Kelchen, Clayton County Development Group Executive Director said, "Childcare is vital for us to sustain rural Iowa, and there is such a desperate need here. To assist and move forward, finding funding opportunities is what we need to do next. We have an expansion coming in the county, and the new business is going to need approximately forty employees, and those employees are going to need childcare. We have people that could be in our workforce currently, and they are telling me that they are stay-at-home moms because they don't have daycare."

To support this initiative, Alpine Communications and Aureon have generously donated funds to help meet the grant's matching requirement. The partnership between Clayton County Development Group, and these generous donors will help improve the lives of working families in Clayton County by addressing a critical need for quality childcare. Chris Hopp, General Manager at Alpine Communications, said, "Alpine Communications is happy to support the Clayton County Development Group with the childcare assessment study for Clayton County. Quality childcare is vital in our communities. We hope this study helps identify solutions for families that help them grow



*Pictured l-r: Ethan Pitt (Ripple Effect Program Director), Jessica Larsen (Aureon Communications Specialist), Darla Kelchen, (Clayton County Development Group Executive Director), and Chris Hopp (Alpine Communications General Manager).*

and thrive in northeast Iowa. We appreciate the work CCDG has put into the grant and the partnership with Aureon in helping move this project forward."

The mission of the Clayton County Development Group is to enhance the opportunities for the creation of wealth for the citizens of Clayton, County Iowa through the promotion of agriculture, industry, and tourism. For more information, please visit <https://www.claytoncountyiowa.com>. Partners include the Clayton County Supervisors, Clayton County Foundation for the Future,

Alpine Communications provides telephone, internet, TV, cellular and security services to Elkader, Iowa, and surrounding communities. For more information, please call 563-245-4000.

Aureon is a premier business solutions provider, with expertise in IT services, consulting, and customer care. For details, please call 888-387-5670.

Developed through a partnership alliance between Aureon and Iowa Area Development Group (IADG), the Ripple Effect program helps Independent Telecommunication Companies and communities become catalysts for advancing the economic health and vitality of rural Iowa.





## Aureon Grant Winner Announced

Aureon is pleased to announce that Elgin Emergency Medical Services is a 2022 Charity Grant recipient. This grant was presented in conjunction with Alpine Communications who sponsored the grant application. Upon reviewing an abundance of applications, the Aureon Charity Grant Committee delegated funds to projects committed to the betterment of local Iowa communities.

Elgin Emergency Medical Services is building from the ground up, so they are continuing to accumulate the necessary equipment they need to serve residents of their community. This grant will be used to help purchase a laptop and other communication devices so EMS is able to stay in touch with others during emergency situations.

**“At Aureon, we understand the significance the charity grants have on rural Iowa communities,” said Scott Behn, CEO of Aureon. “That is why we are compelled to support the nonprofit organizations that bring forth these community-improvement projects that will help these communities succeed. We look forward to supporting future projects that are sure to positively impact rural Iowans.”**

To learn more about how you can apply for these grants visit <https://alpinecom.net/library/aureon-charity-grant/>

# AUREON™



*Pictured from left to right: Todd Van Epps, Aureon; Tammy Moser, Elgin EMS; Lara Duff, Alpine Communications*



Welcome to

## TECH TIP TUESDAY

### Tech Tip Tuesday

Have you heard? Each Tuesday at 12:50 p.m. Lori Keppler delivers Tech Tip Tuesday on KCTN FM 100.1. Since February Alpine Communications has shared information about fiber optics and how it can help you connect to your communities. Some of the topics covered so far have been telehealth, working from home and VPNs, precision agriculture, and how the Internet is delivered. If you missed these messages and would like to learn more about these topics, you can find the Tech Tip Tuesday recordings on our Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn pages. (563-252-3462)

**Simple, trusted and reliable.**

# Telecommunications Assistance

The IUB (Iowa Utilities Board), by authority of the Legislature, oversees programs that provide telephone accessibility to Iowans who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or have difficulty speaking. Those programs are Relay Iowa and Telecommunications Access Iowa.

Relay Iowa is a telephone relay service that helps individuals who have hearing and/or speech difficulties with communicating over the telephone. There is no per-minute cost for users of this service. During a Relay Iowa phone call, a Communication Assistant is present and can assist with facilitating the call in a variety of ways.

The Iowa Equipment Distribution Program, call Telecommunications Access Iowa, helps individuals pay for specialized telephone equipment that is designed to assist in communicating more effectively over the telephone. Qualified individuals that have trouble hearing or speaking on the phone can receive a voucher for approximately 95 percent of the average cost of specialized telephone equipment, including amplified phones, captioned telephones, and wireless devices. (563-873-2276)

**You can apply every five years for equipment assistance. If your hearing or speed difficulties change within five years, you may be eligible to reapply earlier. Applications can be found online at <https://teleiowa.com/> or you can call Alpine Communications at 563-245-4000 for more information.**



TELECOMMUNICATIONS  
**ACCESS IOWA**



## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS INCLUDE:

- Be an Iowa resident
- Be at least 5 years of age or able to use the telecommunications equipment
- Have phone service now or plan on getting it
- Confirm that the equipment you are asking for would make telecommunications easier for you
- Confirm your income meets the requirements



**Overall, Alpine has impressed me with your ability to provide same day service** - something I never expected. Your employees are very well trained and give excellent customer service. You have a lot to be proud of. Thank you for far exceeding my expectations!"

# Call 811 Before You Dig

With spring thaw coming closer every day, you may be thinking about all those projects you have plans for this year. The first step to any construction job should be to call 811. Every digging job requires a call to Iowa One Call to have underground utility lines marked. In some cases, lines are buried close to the surface and could easily be damaged by even shallow digging. Calling 811 to request a utility locate will prevent service interruptions to your neighborhood, serious injuries, and costly repairs to underground lines. Not to mention it is the law.

The Common Ground Alliance issues a DIRT (Damage information Reporting Tool) report annually. This report helps to understand & analyze damages to buried infrastructure in North America. In the 2020 report released in September of 2021 there was an estimated \$30 billion in costs resulting in damages such as facility repair, property damage, medical expenses, business closures, etc.

**Based on the data collected for the DIRT report, five root causes were the reasons for 70% of the damages. They include:**

- Failure to notify the one call center/811 before digging
- Excavator error: Dug prior to verifying marks by test-hole (pothole)
- Excavator error: Failure to maintain clearance
- Locator error: Abandoned facilities with mis-marked or unmarked lines
- Locator error: Locator did not locate

Owners and contractors can prevent many of the damages by creating and implementing job site policies that require verification of all underground utilities before digging can start on a jobsite. Call 811 at least 48 hours before work begins.



When you call, simply tell the operator where you plan to dig and what type of work you'll be doing. The affected local utilities will send a locator to your property, free of charge. Then you'll know what's below and be able to dig safely.

**Please make sure to watch for fiber-optic pedestals and fiber markers that indicate the location of internet, digital TV, and phone cables when burning ditches and mowing. As one of your local service providers, Alpine Communications thanks you in advance for your cooperation.**





**CONNECT WITH US:**

923 Humphrey St.  
PO Box 1008  
Elkader, Iowa 52043

Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
Monday – Friday  
563-245-4000  
or 1-800-635-1059  
www.alpinecom.net

Technical Support:  
1-888-264-2908  
SecureIT Tech Support:  
1-877-373-3320



Please leave a review  
and help us grow:



## Alpine Communications was awarded the 2022 Minnesota Telecom Alliance (MTA) Company Safety Award.

MTA is a trade association that advocates and represents the interests of more than 70 small, medium and large companies that provide advanced telecommunications services like voice, data, wireless video, and high-speed Internet access. Each year this honor to a company that meets or exceeds the MTA's safety criteria.

### The following criteria must be maintained for the entire year to qualify.

- ✓ Active Employee participation. Personnel participate in scheduled training and engage in the safety program. Percentage of participating employees need to be 90% or better. Calculations are based on the number of incomplete classes for the year. (563-426-1732)
- ✓ Safety Training. Ensures that employees who do not attend in-person training complete their safety training in LMS within 90 days.
- ✓ Work site/facility hazard identification results 80% or better. Life safety issues fixed immediately.
- ✓ OSHA's total recordable injury rate, must be below OSHA average of 3.4. (OSHA formula is recordable incidents X 200,000 divided by the number of standard employee labor hours).
- ✓ Maintains Safety Program records, which include Safety Data Sheets, Facility Inspections, and other safety documents.
- ✓ Employees wear PPE when required.



**We are proud of  
our employees  
for putting safety  
first and achieving  
this award.**



MINNESOTA  
TELECOM  
ALLIANCE