

Media Contact:

Will Wiquist, (202) 418-0509
will.wiquist@fcc.gov

For Immediate Release

**5.9 GHz BAND BOOSTS CONSUMER INTERNET ACCESS
DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

*With New Spectrum Access, Wireless ISPs Report Increased Speeds, Decreased
Congestion, and Extended Coverage Areas for Consumers*

WASHINGTON, May 4, 2020—The Federal Communications Commission announced today that its decision to grant wireless Internet service providers (WISPs) temporary access to 5.9 GHz spectrum is helping them keep Americans connected during the coronavirus pandemic. In late March, the FCC’s Wireless Telecommunications Bureau [began granting](#) temporary access, called Special Temporary Authority (STA), to 5.9 GHz spectrum for WISPs serving largely rural and suburban communities. The STAs allow WISPs to use the lower 45 megahertz of the band to help serve their customers. To date, the FCC has granted STAs to more than 100 WISPs, and many of those providers have reported that the spectrum is helping to address the increased demand for broadband associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

“American consumers are relying more than ever on broadband, so I’m pleased that 5.9 GHz spectrum is helping fixed wireless broadband providers deliver faster and more efficient service for consumers,” said FCC Chairman Ajit Pai. “I’m grateful to these companies for making a positive difference in their communities, delivering Internet access that’s sorely needed in some of the hardest-to-connect places in our country.”

Below is a list of how some WISPs are using the 5.9 GHz band:

Amplex, based in Luckey, OH, says the 5.9 GHz STA has been a “great help” in meeting the greater than 30% increase in bandwidth demand due to the pandemic. With a simple software update, the additional spectrum has allowed the provider to increase bandwidth across the network by 50% while also reducing congestion on other spectrum bands.

Bolt Internet, based in Prescott, AZ, was able to alleviate a maxed-out backhaul link, reduce congestion on some access points, and upgrade customer speed packages on other access points by using wider channels.

Gtek Communications, based in Portland, TX, has implemented the 5.9 GHz spectrum grant on three access points, benefitting 245 customers with wider channels and lower latency.

Intermax Networks, based in Coeur d’Alene, ID, has seen “surprising figures” by using the 5.9 GHz spectrum, with dramatically decreased noise floors and some access points seeing increased throughput of up to 75%. This has helped the provider connect both residences and businesses to high-quality VOIP service.

Kellin Communications, based in Larkspur, CO, has had “great success” with increases of up to 40% bandwidth.

MetaLINK Technologies, based in Defiance, OH, notes the additional unlicensed spectrum in the 5.9 GHz band enables it to “provide a better Internet experience” for customers by “expanding the throughput, reducing latency, and providing better modulation in a less noisy environment.”

MJM Telecom Corp, based in Staten Island, NY, reports “significant increases in quality, speed and reliability” on two towers serving at least 500 customers.

Nextlink, based in Hudson Oaks, TX, has found “tremendous success moving its gear to the 5.9 GHz band where it has operated with much less interference.” Over 2,000 subscribers have been able to upgrade their speed plans to higher levels than was possible before the grant, and the reduction in interference has benefitted other WISPs operating nearby.

Skynet360, based in Florida City, FL, has used the 5.9 GHz STA to extend network access to over 100 homes in a rural area of the Florida Everglades.

Softcom Internet Communications, based in Galt, CA, added additional capacity to towers in its existing 5.8 GHz network that were over capacity due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This maintained speed and performance for 75 customers.

Southern Broadband, based in Crystal Beach, TX, has seen a “great increase in deliverable bandwidth due to lack of noise.” It applied the spectrum grant to two units, increasing traffic by 300 Mbps and clearing congestion for over 300 customers.

TCC Skywire NW, based in Errol, NH, is using the 5.9 GHz STA on three of its critical backhaul links, resulting in a nearly 40% improvement in throughput, providing “great relief” to rural areas in northern New Hampshire.

Wavelinc Communications, based in Bucyrus, OH, reports the STA has been an “amazing addition” to its ability to provide faster service by using wider channels, helping to meet the 25% increase in bandwidth consumption from stay-at-home orders.

ZIRKEL Wireless, based in Steamboat Springs, CO, saw many of its access points strained when stay-at-home orders were issued. The 5.9 GHz spectrum alleviated that pressure, helping customers “remain connected with fast speeds to work and learn remotely.”

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Media Relations: (202) 418-0500 / ASL: (844) 432-2275 / TTY: (888) 835-5322 / Twitter: @FCC / www.fcc.gov

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