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Verizon To Announce Philly FiOS TV Launch Plans Nov. 23

Telco To Take On Comcast In Top MSO's Hometown

By Todd Spangler -- Multichannel News, November 20, 2009

Verizon will hold a news conference on Monday, Nov. 23, to announce its FiOS TV rollout plans in Comcast's hometown of Philadelphia.

Under the terms of its 15-year franchise agreement with Philadelphia, Verizon has agreed to make **FiOS TV available throughout the city over the next seven years**. The telco has previously claimed it will offer more than twice as many HD channels as Comcast.

The press conference is scheduled for Monday, Nov. 23, at 10:30 a.m., at Verizon's Video Hub Office at 17 East Oregon Ave. Company officials on hand are scheduled to include Verizon Pennsylvania president Gale Given and Mary Yarbrough, vice president of marketing and sales operations for the company's Mid-Atlantic region.

Verizon began construction of the FiOS network in **Philadelphia in April**. The telco expects that when the buildout is completed in 2016, it will be able to offer FiOS service to about 660,000 households including living units in apartment buildings. The first fiber for FiOS will be laid in **Chestnut Hill**, followed by other neighborhoods including **Brewerytown, East and West Mount Airy, South Philadelphia and Kensington**, according to Verizon. About 500 workers will be dedicated to building out the FiOS network in the city.

Verizon will pay Philadelphia a 5% franchise fee, as Comcast does. In addition, the agreement requires Verizon to fund public-access channels but not until the fifth year of its franchise agreement. After that date, Verizon would pay grants of \$1 million for educational access, \$1.5 million for government access and \$2.7 million for public access.

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