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Matanuska Telephone Association Overcomes Harsh Climate, Economic Elements for FTTH Deployment in Alaska

Clearfield helps MTA overcome high labor costs, volcanic ash, and glacial silt:MTA saving an estimated $300 - $500 per customer on 'final drops to home.'

MINNEAPOLIS--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- The harsh elements of the Alaskan tundra -- including heavy snow, extreme cold, glacial silt and even volcanic ash -- are not deterring Matanuska Telephone Association (MTA) from advancing its fiber to the home (FTTH) deployment in south-central Alaska. With the help of Clearfield, Inc. (NASDAQ: CLFD), the combined greenfield and brownfield initiative, routing fiber for improved telecommunications services is considered every time new cable is required.

While Alaska is known for its harsh elements, perhaps the harshest is the economic issue associated with the cost of deploying a fiber-based telecommunications system over such a wide expanse of land. According to MTA's Outside Plant Network Planner Rod Schultz, it can cost upwards of $90,000 per linear mile to trench cable in Alaska. Because OSP FTTH costs are exacerbated by the already expensive trenching costs, Clearfield's FieldSmart Fiber Deliver Point (FDP) Pedestal Inserts, which are Rural Utilities Service (RUS)-listed, have proven to be a boon to this stage of deployment.

"We are literally saving $300-$500 per customer on this build because of these pedestals (versus the conventional "handhole and terminal tail" method). We can now place fiber at, or close to, the cost of copper," Schultz said.

Integrating distribution splices, splitters and slack cable for any FTTH deployment, the FieldSmart FDP Pedestal Inserts are a cost-effective and flexible option for fiber deployment. Engineered to allow for FTTH rollouts without a large initial capital expense, integrated fiber management also minimizes the risk of fiber damage.

In order to withstand the often treacherous elements of Alaska, MTA used Clearfield's FieldSmart Fiber Scalability Center for its outside plant PON cabinet requirements. In addition to the snow and temperature extremes, the issue of volcanic ash and glacial silt established the importance of a tight seal and ruggedized protection.

Volcanic ash and glacier dust can be insidious, as granules can even work their way into tightly sealed car headlights, Schultz explained. "We're happy to report that Clearfield's cabinets are even engineered to be volcano proof. We recently went out and opened them up, and there was no sign of volcanic ash inside the cabinets, even though they were covered with it on the outside," he said.

About MTA
MTA is an Alaskan communications cooperative founded in 1953 to bring telephone service to the Matanuska and Eagle River Valleys. Today, its service area extends across nearly 10,000 square miles - from Eagle River to Clear Air Force Base, just south of Fairbanks. MTA stores are located in Palmer, Eagle River, and Wasilla, Alaska.

MTA delivers some of the most advanced communications products available in the marketplace, including wireless, high-definition digital television, high-speed DSL internet, long-distance, business communication systems and local service.

About Clearfield, Inc.
Clearfield, Inc. designs and manufactures the WaveSmart platform of powered optical signal products, including the WaveSmart PowerNode 1550 EDFA, and the FieldSmart Fiber Management Platform, which includes its latest generation FieldSmart Fiber Distribution System (FDS), FieldSmart Fiber Scalability Center (FSC) and FieldSmart Fiber Delivery Point (FDP) series. The FDS, FSC and FDP product lines support a wide range of panel configurations, densities, connectors and adapter options, and are offered alongside an assortment of passive optical components. Clearfield provides a complete line of fiber and copper assemblies for inside plant, outside plant and access networks. Clearfield is a public company, traded on NASDAQ:CLFD.

More information about Clearfield, Inc., its products and its people can be found at www.ClearfieldConnection.com.

Source: Clearfield, Inc.