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Telecommunications in Eldorado

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I recently went in to a local Telstra shop and was told by the salesperson that “you don't move to Eldorado for the technology”. I moved to Eldorado 10 years ago back when Dial Up was sufficient for our needs so it would be fair to say that we have been left behind.

Our small town has about 100 households with around 300 people living here. Our mobile reception is classed as either Poor or Non Existent. The whole town being a mobile Black spot. Our Internet is also poor with a handful of households being able to receive ADSL and the rest having either Satellite (with speeds comparable to dial up) or Wireless which generally requires expensive antennas being that our mobile reception is so poor, and is also quite an expensive option. Our fixed phone lines are in poor health which is why we are unable to receive ADSL being that our exchange is around 4.5 km from the edge of town and, at my house and many others, only have the option of connecting with Telstra.

We use the internet in rural areas the same as anyone living in a larger town or City. Our children need it for school and i strongly feel that my children have been disadvantaged by the lack of infrastructure in our town. We are unable to get bundled services from Telecommunication providers, as they only offer these to people who have ADSL, so we pay more for the services we do get. Our mobile broadband costs us \$65 for 8gb of data which with teenage children lasts around 2-3 weeks before it gets used up. My 17 year old son has said that he will be moving out of home as soon as he is able so he can get decent internet as he is unable to pursue his chosen career path without broadband.

The NBN has been delivered to areas all around us, many of these areas having access to ADSL2 and good Mobile reception. Eldorado has been forgotten again. I contacted the NBN co and the only answers i got was that it will be there but not sure if it will be sooner or later. Back in 2012 we were told that we will have Fixed Wireless by Mid 2015. thanks to a change in government we still have no NBN or are even on the planned rollout. I had seriously considered selling my **home**, prior to the news that we would be getting NBN mid 2015, so my children where given the same opportunities as their school mates and were not disadvantaged as alot of the work requires internet access for research and to also lodge some of their homework. So I was angry and disappointed to see that 2015 would not give us NBN. I feel I have let my children down as they are both in their senior years at school and for me to sell and move now would be too late for them. Many day to day things are now online based including banking and purchasing things such as insurance or booking a holiday. Funnily enough people in our rural community do use the bank, holiday and need insurance just the same as people in urban areas but of course some of us need to get in our cars and drive 20km to town to access these services so we are also hit in the hip pocket due to the lack of services. I pay \$65 for 8gb of data on the wireless network, paid around \$600 + for antennas so i can use this service which can be slow at times and have drop outs. I have been told that we have FIBRE in the town but this has not been connected by any of the large Telco's. Obviously not enough revenue for them from this small country ton to make it worth while.

Our town is classed as being in a High Fire risk area which is concerning considering that our only methods of reliable communication is our fixed line phones and I feel that our lack of mobile services could one day cost a life. At my house i can send a message in the bedroom with the phone up against the window or if I go to the top of the property. Some people aren't this lucky. Telstra has better reception than Optus but saying this they are both non existent in some areas of the town including the Post office.

I once tried to get a better deal on my home phone but was told that i cant get optus services where i live so once again feel a little ripped off. I get good customer service from telsta but they are by far the most expensive for all services however i have no other options.

To sum it all up we use Internet, mobile and fixed line phones just like anyone else would in Urban areas. Our Kids are still asked to do the same work at school as the others who have better services and we like to have the options to shop around for a better deal. We like to shop online our kids like to play online computer games, we enjoy checking our Face book pages and seeing what our friends are up to . We send SMS messages to our friends and family, use our smart phones for numerous things and like to have the peace of mind that our kids can be contacted. Just like people in urban areas. However we pay more have poor quality reception have less options and are disadvantaged by the lack of service in our area. I really feel that the Telco's and more importantly the government has really let us down and other communities like ours.

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